

Homosexuals express faith, love at MCC

By RICHARD C. DUJARDIN
Journal-Bulletin Religion Writer

PROVIDENCE — Each Sunday evening, the members of the Metropolitan Community Church gather at the Mathewson Street United Methodist Church for worship.

The atmosphere is calm and reverent, as strains of "How Great Thou Art" fill the air. Downstairs, a dozen or so children gather at the same time for their weekly Sunday school lesson.

Outwardly the church is like many. Besides the Sunday school, the church runs flea markets and potluck suppers, conducts Bible study courses and holds worship services in which members pray for one another, read Biblical passages, and partake of Communion bread and wine.

Its minister, the Rev. Marge Ragona, — talks of the importance of a religious conversion experience to Jesus Christ. A daughter of a Methodist minister, she is a former fifth-grade teacher and a former religious education director of a Southern Baptist church in Louisiana.

Ragona says she is "born again."

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SHE IS also a lesbian, a mother of three, and the pastor of Providence's only avowedly "homosexual" church, a congregation numbering 40 or so regular members, 15 or so "hangers on" and some 25 to 30 children of "gay" parents.

For the last couple of years, MCC had been holding its services at the Mathewson Street Methodist Church each Sunday at 7 p.m. The group used to hold services in a private apartment, but gave that up because rocks were thrown through the window during services.

Members of the church range in age from the early 20s to the 70s, and are individuals and "couples" of all kinds. There are "closet gays" who keep their homosexuality a secret outside the close confines of the church walls, avowed homosexuals and lesbians who are quite "open" about it at home and work, and "straight people," an estimated 15 percent of the congregation who re-

comes when you are not doing God's will."

And like the fig tree bearing good fruit, she said, "we too will flourish if we are open and loving and giving toward one another. It matters not how others may judge us. We have but one Judge. And by our fruits the Lord will know us."

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LATER in the service, the children in the Sunday school arrive to join their parents for the Communion.

Breaking bread on the altar table, Pastor Ragona recites Christ's words of the Last Supper, blessing the bread and the wine. And on signal the participants come up to the Communion rail. They walk up as couples hand-in-hand, as individuals, or as mother-and-child, or as mother-lover-and-child, depending on the circumstance.

Dipping the bread into the wine, the minister places the Communion on the tongue of the kneeling communicants. Then in a minute-long embrace, she huddles with the individual and/or couple, reciting a prayer asking God's help in overcoming the struggles and problems of the moment.

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MEMBERS of the congregation give varied reasons for coming to Metropolitan Community Church.

A 39-year-old college professor said that at first he was afraid to be seen walking into a "gay" church, even though he did not fear being seen in gay bars.

"But the vibrations and love I found here were so strong that I knew I just had to stay," he said. "I received so much faith in myself and in my God here that nothing else seems to matter."

A lesbian mother of six and a lesbian mother of two, both divorced, said the church Sunday school afforded them an opportunity to worship again "as a family."

The parents said they did not think attendance at a predominantly homosexual church would cause their children to be homosexuals. "I think there is enough peer pressure not be different that most children are going to choose a heterosexual way of life, regardless of what parents say or do."

Another man said he disagreed slightly. "I don't think people have a choice to-

Sunday service

The Rev. Marge Ragona, above center, "huddles" in prayer with two people after they received Communion at the Metropolitan Community Church, Providence's only church for homosexuals. At right, the congregation joins hands during a prayer. Story on this page.

—Journal-Bulletin Photos
by LAWRENCE S. MILLARD



RAGONA

keep their homosexuality a secret outside the close confines of the church walls, "avowed homosexuals and lesbians who are quite 'open' about it at home and work, and 'straight people,' an estimated 15 percent of the congregation, who regard MCC as a nice place to go to church.

Seventy percent of the members are former Catholics. Most of the rest are Episcopalian, Methodist, Adventist or Baptist.

"We're getting more Protestants now than we used to," says the 49-year-old woman pastor, who often shows up for services wearing denim jeans and jacket over a clerical blouse and Roman collar.

Pastor Ragona observed that the church's former pastor, the Rev. Joseph Gilbert, was an ex-Episcopalian who ran his services in a high style, with church vestments and formal liturgies, which usually attracted the Catholics and Episcopalians.

She said her services are "less rigid and formal. So we're getting more Protestants now, and I think most of our members are more content with it."

ANY SUNDAY NIGHT one finds a service much like any other. It is regarded by many as reverent and spiritual, yet low-key.

There are scripture readings, traditional hymns and spontaneous prayers. Members start the Lord's Prayer with "Our Creator" instead of "Our Father."

"We've been going through the prayers and the hymns to take out the offensive sexist terminology," a member explained.

The sermon also tends to be traditional, though geared to the needs of homosexuals. At one recent service, the subject was sin, and on a scriptural verse taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew:

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit... Thus you will know them by their fruits."

Talking about sin to a congregation in the Metropolitan Community Church is like walking "a narrow tight-rope," Pastor Ragona conceded. On the one hand, some people are still wrestling with the question of whether God considers their homosexuality a sin. On the other, some people have already been so burdened with feelings of guilt and anxiety about homosexuality that they don't want to hear about sin at all, she said.

BUT SIN is worth talking about, she said. What Jesus is talking about, she said, is not just one particular kind of sin, but an entire spectrum of things — turning one's back from a person in need, striking out in anger against loved ones, judging and pre-judging other individuals.

Avoiding sin, she said, gives one a "sense of liberation" and frees one from the "load of depression and anxiety that

homosexuals... peer pressure... children are going to choose a heterosexual way of life, regardless of what parents say or do."

Another man said he disagreed slightly. "I don't think people have a choice. It's the way God makes you. If I had a choice between being gay or straight, I would have chosen being straight."

Pauline Johnson, a 71-year-old black woman from Newton, Mass., is "straight." But she comes to MCC, she says, because "I had a religious experience at MCC that I hadn't had in years. I've experienced more love, more Christianity here than I've seen anywhere."

PASTOR RAGONA says that as a teenager she wanted to be a missionary. But she changed her mind while attending nursing school when she went to a lesbian bar and discovered she was a homosexual.

So she went into nursing instead and eventually married a psychology professor at Louisiana State University. Her husband — a "bisexual" — "knew I was gay." But both shared the same vision of a little house in the country with kids.

But her husband died four years later of cancer and she took up residence with a woman companion. During that time, she says, she underwent a "born-again" experience and came to feel that God would "accept" her homosexuality.

She began teaching at a nearby elementary school, joined the Baptist Church, and became a Sunday school teacher and the religious education director.

She remarried, but the marriage didn't last. She said that when her husband learned she was "gay, all hell broke loose."

Then in 1973, she returned to New York, and after deciding to become a minister in the Metropolitan Church, she broke the news about her homosexuality to her two teenage sons and younger daughter. She moved to Providence last year after studying at New York Theological Seminary and the Institute for Theology.

SHE DEFINES "gayness" as an "emotional, affectional sexual attraction to a person of the same sex."

The minister says she regards homosexuality as "a normal variation" and does not share the view of many churches that a homosexual way of life is "intrinsically disordered."

Sex between homosexuals, like heterosexual promiscuity, may be morally wrong "if it is not done in a loving and caring way," she says. "but what bothers me is that while you have a lot of fundamentalists condemning gays, you don't hear them talking about rapists."

She says being a homosexual today does take "its toll on the personality" because of the constant fear of being found out.

She says her two sons, ages 19 and 20, and her daughter, 13, are used to her homosexuality now and "have a grudging respect for what I'm doing."

R.I. Baha'i on equality

THE RHODE ISLAND BAHAI COMMUNITY will sponsor a talk on "The Equality of Men and Women — A Basis for World Peace" at the Mariam J. Mohr Library in Johnston on Tuesday from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The talk will be the second in a three-part series on "Human Rights."

Speaking will be Susan R. Berge, economic analyst with Tucker, Anthony & R. L. Day Inc. A Baha'i since 1970, she has been a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom for three years and is currently serving as chairman of the Cranston Baha'i Assembly and chairman of the Rhode Island Baha'i Teaching Committee.

After the talk, there will be discussion and refreshments. The public is invited to attend this free lecture.

AN OPENING-OF-SCHOOL LITURGY will be held Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in the Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul. The Most Rev. Louis E. Gelineau, Roman Catholic bishop of Providence, will be the principal celebrant.

All pastors with schools, pastors with parishioners in Catholic schools, principals, regional school board presidents, teachers, as well as parents and students have been invited by Brother Stephen O'Hara, FSC, the superintendent of schools in the diocese. The Most Rev. Kenneth A. Angell, auxiliary bishop, will be the homilist.

The fifth annual Distinguished Service Award will be presented to two outstanding educators in the diocese at the conclusion of the liturgy.

A PRIEST FROM PAWTUCKET, the Rev. Laurence M. Olaszewski, CSC, has arrived in Senegal, Africa, to work as a program assistant for Catholic Relief Services.

Father Olaszewski, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Olaszewski of 11 Coyle Ave., Pawtucket, holds degrees from Stonehill College, the University of Montreal, Harvard University and the University of Salamanca, Spain. He was ordained in North Easton, Mass., in 1964.

Catholic Relief Services is the official overseas aid and development agency of American Catholics. Its programs in 86 countries are valued at \$225 million annually.



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gay community news

Vol. 5, No. 18 November 5, 1977

The Gay Weekly

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Marge Ragona:
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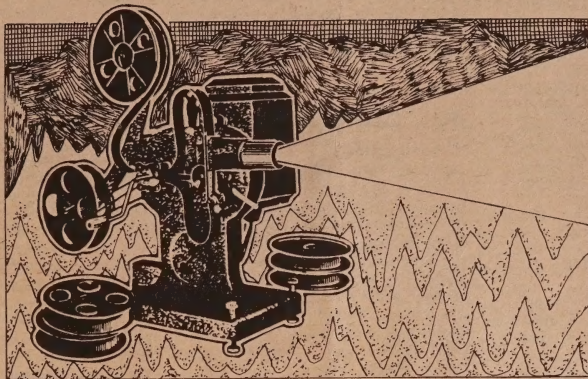
Safety Regulations Under Attack

8 Die As Fire Sweeps D.C. Gay Movie House

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In the second major fire in a gay-oriented establishment in recent months, eight men have died in a blaze that swept a Washington movie house last Monday. The fire, which destroyed the Cinema Follies, trapped 15 men as they were watching gay porno films in the theatre, located on the second floor of a cinder-block building. Only one of the 15 patrons escaped without injury; six men were hospitalized and one of them remains in critical condition. The cause of the blaze is as yet unknown. A *Washington Post* account described the building on the day after the fire as having "the grim, burned out appearance appropriate to a death trap."

The Cinema Follies blaze comes four months after fire destroyed the Everard Baths in New York City. In the Everard tragedy, which took place last May 25, nine men lost their lives while 10 others were injured.

According to fire officials, the cinema appeared to be in compliance with District of Columbia fire and building regulations. These regulations require every "assembly room" that holds fewer than 74 persons to have one exit door with an exit light above it. The Cinema Follies had that one required exit door, but the door was the front door of the run-down



cinema; it was from this door that the fire roared up the steps into the cinema itself. Another door, which led from the inside of the theatre to the roof, could not be opened, and fire officials are still attempting to discover the reason why this was so.

The cinema met city fire and building requirements when it was inspected by fire officials in June of 1976. In the spring of this year, fire officials made an informal inspection, and the

premises once again met regulations.

However, in the wake of the Cinema Follies disaster, fire officials now assert that fire regulations are too lax. "The regulations aren't good enough," Chief H. H. Shaffer of the fire department's fire prevention division told the *Post*. "I personally think that any place where people gather for whatever reason should have a second way out other than the way you came in."

The fire appalled Washington's gay

community and an emergency community meeting, under the auspices of the Gay Activists Alliance, was held the day after the blaze. GAA members, expressing "consternation" about existing fire regulations, met with city officials, and there was talk of gay people "policing" their own establishments.

Washington's Metropolitan Community Church put itself in charge of all bodies that might be unclaimed and a church memorial service was scheduled to be held Sunday.

Fire official Shaffer said that he is investigating the "consistent claim" from several fire survivors that the theatre door to the roof was padlocked. "One of my own fire investigators said he saw a padlock on that door," Shaffer stated. "But there is no physical way to hang a padlock on it." He admitted that such a padlock might have been lost as firefighters broke through the door.

One fire survivor remembered that he "held that lock in my hand — it was heavy brass or else a brass-colored padlock. It was the type you would put a key in from the bottom to open it. When I held that lock in my hand I was very angry. I cannot explain the rage I felt at that moment."

Montreal Police Arrest 135 in Leather Bar Raid

MONTREAL, Canada — Dressed in battle fatigues and carrying semi-automatic M-16 weapons, a special squad of Montreal Police raided a gay leather bar last Friday evening, arresting 135 men. All those arrested at the bar "Trucks" were charged under Quebec law with "being found inside a bawdy house" while the owners of the bar were charged with "operating a common bawdy house." Eight people were also charged with "gross indecency" and all the arrested men were booked, compelled to undergo examinations for

venereal disease, and then released.

The police raid was the strongest crackdown in the city since last year's Olympics, when gay bars and baths were the targets of police action. On the day following last week's police action, some 1500-2000 gay people marched in a militant demonstration in downtown Montreal in protest. No other bars in the city have been raided.

Constable Charles Poxon of the Montreal Police told GCN by telephone the raid was not part of a

general anti-gay "crackdown." "I'm sure that was not their [the police's] intention," said Poxon. "There were gross indecencies going on, right in the open. The police were cracking down on crime, whether it be male-female, male-male, or female-female."

Poxon reported that the raid was carried out after consultation with state prosecutors and after two weeks of observation of the bar by the police Division of Morality Section. According to Poxon the "gross indecencies"

took place on the second and third levels of the bar. All 80 people arrested on the basement and first levels were released immediately, said the constable.

One observer said that the bar was "the closest thing that Montreal has to a New York-style back-room bar." However, he did add that "what went on in Trucks is nothing compared to what goes on in New York." The bar remains open at this point, pending the outcome of the case.

IWY Sends Lesbian Rights Proposal to Houston

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Lesbian rights is one of the 26 official proposals which the International Women's Year Commission will send for debate at the national meeting of women to be held in Houston Nov. 18-21. All 26 proposals were endorsed by a majority of state-level meetings of women held earlier this year. Lesbian rights, although not proposed originally by the IWY Commission for discussion at the state-level meetings, was endorsed at 30 state meetings.

Other proposals approved for debate in Houston include the Equal Rights Amendment (endorsed at 41 meetings) and abortion rights (approved in 36 states). Other recommendations to be discussed include the establishment of a cabinet-level department of women in the federal government, federally funded studies of new birth control methods, and goals and timetables for hiring women in government.

The issues of lesbian rights, abortion, and the ERA are expected to be

extremely volatile in Houston, as they have been at the preliminary meetings throughout the country. The "New Right" will be well-represented in many delegations at the Houston conference and these delegates are expected to launch a major assault on

the feminist proposals. Ku Klux Klan delegates apparently control the Mississippi delegation and there are reports that they will attempt to cause a major disruption at the conference. In addition, the Mormon Church controls the Utah delegation and John Birch

Society women will also be present in many delegations.

The IWY Commission is headed by former Rep. Bella Abzug and the U.S. government has allotted more than \$5 million for the state-level and Houston meetings.

Jesuits Oust Gay Ordination Candidate

NEW YORK — Thomas Sweetin, the Jesuit candidate who was denied ordination last year because of his homosexuality, has now been dismissed by the order after 13 years of preparation for the priesthood. Sweetin acknowledges that he is gay but asserts that he has always been inactive.

Rev. Albert P. Bartlett, vice provincial in charge of priestly preparation for New York's Jesuit order, claimed that Sweetin's "total personality" was a major factor in the dismissal. He questioned Sweetin's "ability to relate

to other people" and, in a letter to Sweetin, mentioned the "adoption of certain forms of behavior, characteristic of a homosexual life style."

The Order's action was opposed by Sweetin's immediate superior, Rev. Frederic M. O'Connor, and a group of other priests at the Jesuit Community Center in Manhattan. O'Connor and 17 priests signed a letter protesting the action. O'Connor maintained that the charge of homosexuality "was not sufficient ground" for dismissal. "There could be a change," he said.

"Perhaps in two or three years there could be the ordination of a publicly admitted homosexual."

In an appeal to the Sacred Congregation for Religious at the Vatican, Sweetin had stated, "It is true — I am a homosexual. However, I have never once acted upon my sexuality nor have I ever attempted to justify anyone's acting upon his or her sexuality."

"I have been willing to openly acknowledge my feelings and my belief that homosexuality is not anything to be ashamed about," said Sweetin.

news notes

EUGENE, ORE., BARS BIAS

EUGENE, ORE. — The Eugene City Council voted last week to add the words "sexual orientation" to the city's 1969 Human Rights Ordinance. The decision came on a 5-3 vote, but the decision must be approved one more time in order for it to become law. The ordinance bars discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations. A move to weaken the measure failed 6-2.

If, as expected, the bill gains the necessary second approval, the city will become the third municipality to enact a gay rights ordinance since the repeal of a similar ordinance in Dade County, Florida. The other two cities who have passed such measures since the Miami vote are Wichita, Kansas, and Champaign-Urbana, Illinois.

McNEILL SILENCING ASSAILED

MT. RAINIER, MARYLAND — The Quixote Center, the Catholic-based justice center, has sent a letter to bishops and Jesuit provincials in the United States, strongly criticizing the recent Vatican silencing of Fr. John McNeill for his pro-gay views. "The silencing of an American priest is a very serious affront to our cherished democratic ideals of free discussion" which aligns Church authorities "not with Jesus, but with totalitarian rulers of the secular world who fear free speech and fight open discussion," wrote the staff of the Center.

The Center urged the bishops and Jesuit provincials to do everything in their power to reverse the Vatican decision to silence McNeill. "This particular silencing has an especially destructive impact upon Catholic homosexuals who are struggling to be accorded their legitimate civil and religious rights," the letter noted.

RHODE ISLAND RALLY

PROVIDENCE — The Rhode Island Gay Political Caucus is sponsoring, "A Call to Action" for gay rights on Saturday, November 5th from 3:30 to 5 pm. at the First Unitarian Church, corner Benefit and Benevolent Streets, Providence.

Massachusetts State Representative Elaine Noble will speak on the subject, "Gay Rights — Where Do We Go From Here?"

Other local gay rights leaders and supporters will discuss:

- What the recent Supreme Court decisions mean to gay people

- How to get involved in gay rights work in Rhode Island

- What the proposed Providence anti-discrimination ordinance would mean for the gay community.

The rally will be followed by a benefit-reception at the Fire and Drum, Weybosset and Dorrance Streets in Providence.

CITIZENS VS. WBUR

BOSTON — WBUR station manager Bonnie Cronin and Boston University journalism professor and station "adviser" Blaine Littell appear to have agreed in principle to the formation of a Listener Advisory Group to help plan programming. According to Dave Tilton of the "watchdog" Listener Advisory Group who met with the two last week, Cronin and Littell agreed to bring the idea to Boston University Vice President Gross. The university-owned radio station has come under pressure from BU officials to modify its community-oriented programming policies and to adhere more closely to the views of BU President John Silber. "Gay Way," the weekly gay radio show, has reportedly incurred Silber's wrath but station officials maintain that the show is in no danger.

Dave Tilton told GCN that his group is now in the process of drafting a definite proposal. "If we come up with a viable plan, it would be political suicide to say no," said Tilton.

DEPORTING GREECE'S GAYS

ATHENS, Greece — The Greek Ministries of Public Order and Social Services are preparing a bill which provides for the deportation of the nation's homosexuals, the London Gay News writes. The bill reportedly provides for one year imprisonment for first-time gay "offenders" and deportation if they are convicted for a second time.

BOYCOTTING MIAMI

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. — The National Education Assn. and the American Library Assn. have written to Miami Beach's convention bureau manager to announce that they will not hold their national conventions there because of Florida's failure to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. While neither group had made formal commitments to hold conventions in Miami Beach, had the two groups done so they would have spent about \$8 million in the city. Florida refused to ratify the ERA last spring, shortly before anti-gay forces won the repeal of the Dade County gay rights referendum. Fear of homosexuality played a large part in the ERA's defeat in the Florida legislature.

In addition, gay boycotts of Miami Beach are beginning to take some toll. "The impact from the gay issue is not as great, but it is picking up momentum," Hal Cohen, executive director of the Miami Beach Tourist Development Authority, told the Miami Herald. Cohen noted that a group of 100 Brazilians recently cancelled out because of the gay issue but he doubted that they were involved in the gay rights movement itself.



Rep. Francis W. Hatch, Jr.

HATCHING A GOVERNOR

BOSTON — State Rep. Francis W. Hatch (R-Beverly) last week announced his candidacy for the Republican nomination for Governor. Hatch has been a co-sponsor of Massachusetts gay rights legislation for the last two years. As minority leader in the House of Representatives, he has testified in support of anti-discrimination legislation, and debated in support of it on the floor of the House.

In making the announcement, Hatch said, "Michael Dukakis should not be Governor. He has been our governor for almost three years, and he has failed — failed to provide the kind of bold leadership he promised, failed to make the kind of decisions Massachusetts needs to make this state a better place in which to live."

Other possible candidates of the Republican gubernatorial nomination include Middlesex County Sheriff John J. Buckley, State Rep. Charles Flaherty (D-Cambridge) and former Massport director Edward J. King.

Anyone wishing to assist in the Hatch campaign has been asked to contact the Hatch Committee at (617) 523-2551.

UPCOMING TV

NEW YORK — ABC-TV's show "Family" will present a drama that involves a lesbian schoolteacher. The show was prepared with the advice of Dr. Sheila Bobb, a clinical psychologist involved with the Gay Media Task Force in Hollywood. Ginny Vida of the National Gay Task Force reports that the advanced word on the show is that it is "very positive."

On the other side of the coin, anti-gay crusader Anita Bryant will appear on NBC's Today show on Thursday, November 3. The show is aired at 7 a.m. but it is not known at exactly what time Bryant will make her appearance.

EXTENDING ERA DEADLINE

NEW YORK — With the future of the national Equal Rights Amendment in doubt, the National Gay Task Force has urged lesbians and gay men to support a bill to be introduced in Congress that would extend the deadline for the ratification of the ERA. The bill, introduced by Reps. Elizabeth Holtzman and Margaret Heckler, would extend until March 1986 the date on which 3/4 of the state legislatures must ratify the ERA. The deadline currently expires in 1979, and ERA proponents are fearful that the 3 additional states necessary to ratify the amendment may not do so by that time. The Carter Administration is supporting the deadline extension.

In urging gay support for the ERA extension proposal, NTF co-director Jean O'Leary stated, "Its (the ERA's) passage will help set a progressive climate for passage of gay rights legislation, even though it will not benefit all gays directly, and the deadline extension may provide the extra time needed."

ANOTHER BU BATTLE

BOSTON — Apparent attempts by the Silber administration to gain control of the Boston University media may be meeting a court challenge soon. The Boston law firm of Homans, Hamilton, and Lawton has agreed to take the case of the BU Exposure, a campus newspaper, in its battle with university censorship. The University has asserted that it will not give funds to the newspaper or let it use university facilities unless the Exposure submits its copy for review and editing. The Exposure has refused to do this.

In a letter to the university administration, the newspaper's lawyers stated that BU's "insistence on this right of prior review would threaten, and might violate, these students' constitutional rights."

Although there is no court case at present and the firm has not decided the best course of legal action, Attorney William Homans said, "It's an important case anytime people running a newspaper are told they have to submit it for approval."

SEXUAL POLITICS MEET

HARTFORD CT — Author Kate Millett will join Yale University history professor Dr. John Boswell as keynote speakers at a day-long conference Saturday, November 12 on the theme "Sexual Politics: Alternative Lifestyles and Public Policy."

The program, scheduled for 9 am until about 3:30 pm at 50 Bloomfield Ave., Hartford, will explore the socio-legal determination of what is considered "normal" or acceptable sexuality. The event is co-sponsored by the Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford and by the Hill Center.

The audience will be invited to interact with Millett and Boswell and a panel moderated by the Rev. George Welles, Jr., on "Moral Entrepreneurship and Civil Rights: Who Speaks for Society?" Other panelists are professors Norman Goroff, Anne Huston and Melvin Goldstein; the Rev. Dr. Alan Tull; and attorney G. J. Stillson-MacDonnell.

A final panel will focus on sexual discrimination from the legislative point of view. Moderated by the Rev. F. Jay Deacon, it will include local officials and project director Dr. Jon Darling.

The program is made possible by a grant from the Connecticut Humanities Council. There is no admission charge, and advance registration is not necessary.

Gay Questions Asked on Lie-Detector Test

Affadavits Charge Coors With Sexual Screening

By Jim Marko

GOLDEN, CO — This month GCN has received evidence that, as late as February 1974, Adolph Coors Brewing Company has questioned prospective employees about their sexuality. In signed affidavits, dated September 20, 1977 and issued by Local 366 of the Brewery Workers, AFL-CIO, two former prospective employees have made known that questions about homosexual activities were asked of them during polygraph (lie detector) examinations.

Since April 5 of this year, Local 366 has been on strike at the Coors plant in Golden. According to the union, the major issue in the walkout is not wages but human rights. The union leadership has charged from the beginning that Coors use of the lie detector tests is an invasion of individual rights.

As reported in GCN in July, the Adolph Coors company has had a long practice of requiring the polygraph for applicants as a condition of employment. In that earlier article, a spokesperson for the firm claimed that there is no truth to the reports that job applicants are asked "Are you a homosexual?" "We are not concerned with a prospective employee's sexual preference, sexual background, or the like and those questions are not associated with pre-employment screening," the spokesperson assured GCN.

However, according to John A. Kincannon, he had to submit to a polygraph test for employment at the firm in April of 1973. Kincannon claims

that of the many personal questions asked, one that "most aggravated" him was "Are you a homosexual?" Similarly, Guy C. Decker, who took a pre-employment lie detector test at Coors in February of 1974, charges that he was asked, "Have you ever been involved with homosexuals?"

Despite the increasing evidence that Coors employment practices are discriminatory and disregard the privacy of individuals, there is still conflicting sentiment in the gay community concerning the nationwide boycott against Coors beer. The company took out a full-page advertisement in *The Advocate* in which it denied the claims concerning its hiring practices. *Advocate* editor David Goodstein has suggested that there is no need to boycott the product.

Following the earlier report in GCN and similar stories in other gay publications, the National Gay Leadership Conference held in Denver endorsed the boycott of Coors. The Stonewall Democratic Club of California has joined the AFL-CIO, the United Farmworkers, and the Communications Workers of America in the boycott call, as well.

Without admitting past bias against black, Chicano and female workers, Coors signed an agreement in federal court promising future employment practices will be nondiscriminatory. That settlement agreement was the result of a suit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Com-

mission in Denver U.S. District Court in September of 1975.

The union has charged that the company has not yet complied with the Commission's order and it continues its call for a boycott of the product. That boycott is apparently having some effect in California, where the firm has lost its first place in beer sales. In the Boston area, and the rest of the Northeast, sales of Coors have not been easy to record or follow because the product is not "officially distributed" in the area. The beer on sale in Boston is referred to by the company as a "bootleg variety" and, because of that, Coors suggests that the product not be purchased.

Some gays are boycotting Coors as much for its political stances as its hiring practices. Reports persist that the company contributed money to Save Our Children, Inc. in that group's successful defeat of the gay rights ordinance in Dade County. Joseph Coors, director of the firm, has admitted that he personally has made contributions of \$1,000 a year to Phyllis Schlafly, leader of the anti-ERA forces. Coors contends that he makes payments through a foundation whose name he does not recall.

This admission of contributions to Schlafly is in direct contradiction to a statement by a Coors representative. The spokesperson for the company told GCN that nobody at Coors, "in the Coors family or in the Coors Foundation" has given money to Save Our

Children or to any anti-ERA forces." Over the past few years, the Coors family has contributed to right-wing organizations like the National Right to Work Committee and the Heritage Foundation. Joseph Coors, in addition to contributing to Phyllis Schlafly, has also been a major contributor to the political campaigns of Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan.

Local 366 of the Brewery Workers continues its nearly seven month long strike with the long-voiced contention that the "issue is dignity." The union claims it will hold firm in defense of "human rights," a defense viewed as central to the dispute. The workers continue to call for union and public support of a "massive, nationwide boycott of Coors beer."

On Oct. 6, an administrative law judge for the National Labor Relations Board ruled that Coors had not violated the law as the union had charged. It was the union's contention that Coors misrepresented proposed contract language in a letter to brewery workers. The NLRB judge said the firm had, in fact, misled the workers, but had not broken the law. Although an appeal is planned, the union had placed its hope on a favorable NLRB ruling to end the strike.

It seems that the strike at the plant in Golden is in some trouble. Although 500 strikers are still out, only 100 or so regularly attend the weekly union meetings; reportedly fewer than that show up for picket line duty.

'Christian Cause' Urges Anti-Gay Campaign

CHRISTIAN CAUSE

A Movement to Restore Moral Accountability to American Life

LOS ANGELES — A well-financed, high-quality anti-gay mailing from an organization called *Christian Cause* is being circulated throughout the country. The organization describes itself as A Movement to Restore Moral Accountability to American Life and lists the Los Angeles police chief as special consultant. The mailing, signed by Rev. Robert G. Grant, the president of the *Christian Cause* executive committee, is primarily an appeal for funds and includes a "morality issues poll" in the mailing.

The mailing is addressed "Dear Potential Victim" and leads off with a quote from Bob Green, husband of Anita Bryant. "This is a warning flag to all communities that Christians and other morally upright people better

wake up and get involved before they lose control of their schools and their whole cities," Green is quoted as saying. The letter praises Anita Bryant as a "courageous wife" who "literally put her professional career on the line" and calls Bryant's Miami victory "the most important single victory so far in our movement to restore moral accountability to American life."

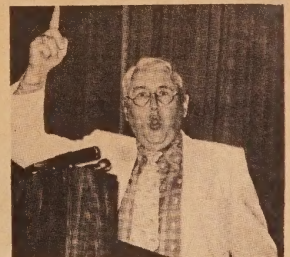
"Her fight is our fight . . . Our supporters are doing something about the moral degeneracy in our society," writes Rev. Grant. "Would you want an admitted, flaunting homosexual teaching your children . . . serving as your minister or priest . . . belonging to your local police or fire fighter force?" asks the four-page mailing.

"Whenever policy is being made . . .

Whenever individuals are deciding ethical issues which affect the lives of millions of 'voiceless' Americans, CHRISTIAN CAUSE plans to be there to promote the Christian position loud and clear," the organization states. TV messages, grass-roots organizing and national opinion polls are listed as three ways to get the Christian Cause message across.

The Morality Issues Poll, included with the mailing, asks Christian Cause supporters:

- Do you support Anita Bryant's stand against "gay rights" bills?
- Do you think homosexuality, lesbianism, and bisexuality are "normal" and should be publicly sanctioned?
- Would you want an admitted homosexual teaching your children . . . serving as your minister or priest . . . belonging to your local police or fire fighter force?
- Are you in favor of abolishing all laws against "victimless crimes" (e.g.,



Los Angeles Police Chief Ed Davis, special consultant to 'Christian Cause.'

prostitution and sodomy)?

- Do you think porno shops and X-rated movies should be allowed to thrive free of any legal interference?

Christian Causes lists itself as sponsored by CALL (Christian American Liberties League), a non-profit, non-denominational religious organization.

Mayor Ralph Assault Charge A Hoax

CAMBRIDGE — Rampant rumors that Somerville (Mass.) Mayor S. Lester Ralph had been arrested on Oct. 21 on a charge of homosexual rape were denied last week after an investigation by the Middlesex County District Attorney's office disclosed that the rumor was a hoax. In a press conference last Monday, Assistant D.A. John F. Kerry called the rumors "unfounded and reprehensible," and told reporters that his investigation had traced the story to one man, who has since recanted.

On Oct. 22, a number of Boston media outlets received anonymous tele-

phone calls stating that Ralph had been arrested for allegedly raping a Somerville man. Within a matter of hours, the story was spreading throughout the city. Some reports had Ralph, who is also a Methodist minister, arrested for soliciting a plainclothes police officer for sex, but later released upon learning his identity.

Kerry said his office traced the reports to one man, who, after some questioning, broke down and conceded that he had conjured up the story. He later passed a lie detector test that attested to his recantation.

Ralph is a lame-duck mayor, having

announced that he would not seek re-election to another term after eight years. As a liberal Protestant clergyman, he has always been controversial in the political affairs of the conservative, working-class city of Somerville (pop. 89,000).

A source familiar with Somerville politics told GCN that Ralph has been especially unpopular with the city's police officers during his tenure as mayor. He was opposed for re-election last time by State Rep. Marie E. Howe, a leader of the anti-gay and anti-abortion forces in the state legislature. During the press conference last week,

Ralph said, "I was extremely shocked at the participation of certain policemen in the spreading of this vicious story, and I remain unconvinced that the chief of police, Thomas J. O'Brien, fully protected my rights as an individual as this incident developed."

It has been suggested that this incident was a way for Ralph's enemies in the city to take their revenge out on the mayor. With Ralph's term expiring at the end of this year, he will be unable to retaliate. As of press time, Ralph said he was undecided as to whether he would seek legal action against the culprit.

shallow antics

Dear GCN,

This is one of the sad truths about foolish people — they do things that attract great attention to themselves while damaging the very causes they claim to espouse. Throwing a pie in Anita Bryant's face made the newspapers. I read about it in the straight press and was appalled. I saw it in GCN and was furious at the thought that we were playing so easily and unthinkingly into the hands of those who hate us.

Throwing a pie is a trivial action, that by its nature makes light of the entire issue concerning which the pie is thrown. Gay rights is hardly an insignificant matter. Any time our cause is represented by foolish or shallow words or antics, the whole movement suffers.

It might indeed give some of us a moment's minor pleasure to see Anita Bryant's face covered in goo, but the price we pay for such silliness is far too high. In such an instance we end up with egg on our faces, and Anita triumphs.

Nancy Walker

in praise of pain

Dear GCN:

Robert Etherington's article on T.E. Lawrence in the October 22 issue demonstrates a attitude toward masochism well illustrated by his characterization of it as a "slightly scandalous" (i.e. titillating) subject. He assumes — without quoting any documentary support — that Lawrence's enjoyment of being beaten was in part due to his guilt over his homosexuality and his wish to do penance. In this attitude, he shares the mistaken notion, recently expressed ad nauseam by John Rechy in his books and interviews, that wanting to be physically hurt is a symptom of self-hatred.

Pain is merely a strong sensation. The desirability or undesirability of pain depends entirely on the needs and desires of the individual. If your pants were on fire, say, the desirability of pain would be in its ability to call one's attention to that crucial circumstance. Strong sensation can be desired and appreciated for its own sake: the blazing tang of a jalapeno pepper, the thunderous dissonances of a composition by Charles Ives. Or strong sensation can be enjoyed for the associations it reinforces, the inhibitions it helps to overcome. Confronted by the overwhelming presence of a bodily pain, our minds are pulled away from their preoccupations and abstractions. To quote one of our very minor contemporary poets: "Pain is like a thunderclap / That clears the air." To be enabled to experience that "thunderclap" can be a gift of love.

Part of our problem lies in the use of a "double vocabulary" for pain. The words "pain," "sadist," "masochist," in their most literal interpretations, have no connotations of undesirability; yet in daily conversation we use them as if "pain" were always undesirable and to be eliminated when possible, "sadism" and "masochism" unhealthy and demeaning attitudes. Similarly, Lawrence's love of "renunciation" and "self-denial," his talk of needing to be "punished," are assumed in modern-day casual conversation to be indicative of unhealthy self-hatred. Yet we are usually "punished" by the ones who care about us most; the relationship between a father and son, a master and disciple,

a teacher and pupil, can be profoundly loving and sexual. Lawrence's attitude toward his sexuality may indeed have been unhappy and troubled; but I do not see how sexuality in and of itself — and by this I include the loving, caring infliction of strong sensation, as "Jock" Bruce seems to have done for Lawrence — can be anything but joyful.

Gary Ralph

new york, new york

To Whom It May Concern:

I find your mention on September 24, 1977 of club New York, New York totally irresponsible. To begin with, you refer to the club as John Addison's, which is totally erroneous as is your report that the club is turning away the gays. I would greatly appreciate your source of information on both details, as well as the names of any gay people that might have been turned away.

As you well know, it is not illegal to do such a thing, but from a business point of view would be quite stupid, as the gay population in New York (as in most other parts of the country) are the trend setters, the disco goers, and therefore the most sought after clientele in the disco industry.

Please write a retraction immediately, or document your evidence. I would greatly appreciate a reply as soon as possible.

I remain,

Sincerely yours,

Maurice Brahms

President

P.S.: John Addison's only affiliation with this club is on a part time basis in a consultant capacity. He does not set policy and if he did, it certainly would not be to turn away the gay people because his philosophy in this matter is very similar to mine.

elaine's role

Dear GCN:

Having returned from six months consulting on the day of this year's gay bill defeat, and having read David Brill's article on Elaine's role in that defeat, I feel like a jackal picking the bones of a good friend. David may be right about Elaine, but I think a little caution is merited in assigning blame for this year's defeat and in consigning Elaine to permanent conservatism.

Without defending Elaine, gay people ought to recognize her broader role in politics. She represents a small district, is part of Kevin White's political machine, has adhered closely to the legislative leadership in the House, and cannot rightly be labelled either liberal or conservative. Her visible power — a national gay and feminist constituency — is evanescent and impotent in strengthening her real power. With extraordinary skill and no little luck, Elaine has capitalized on her role as a politician and her courage as a gay person. Her gains are largely the result of her skill, rather than our support, and she deserves the credit.

At the same time that Elaine has successfully used her charisma with the media, gay people have believed their own press releases. Elaine works in a fog of gay adulation wherever she travels. She sometimes shows a remarkable

ability to penetrate that fog and help her constituents, but those constituents always demand more than she can deliver. She remains a concerned, articulate and practical politician in spite of gay support, rather than because of it. She does make mistakes, however, and we should be neither surprised nor angered that she is human.

It is a mark of Elaine's success that she has now achieved sufficient power and visibility that we may now criticize her. In criticism, however, we must not lose sight of her achievements, nor of how much she is still needed. It is as important for more gay people to get into politics as it is for those who respect Elaine to support her selectively. In the course of that selective support we may find that she is not the gay political wet dream many have imagined. But she is still the most charismatic representative gay people have ever found. She is still in office, and she still has access to political leaders. She still has immense talent, much of which has yet to be fully developed. She merits our concern as a sister, as a friend, and as a responsible official. David's article shows such a concern, and, respecting his professional dedication and personal commitment, I can understand his disappointment. I feel it necessary to warn others, however, that Elaine is still the strongest politician we have. Her mistakes should not obscure the warm respect many feel for her. Her quixotic behavior this year should not hide her history of generally able leadership in years past. I sense there may be justice in David's analysis of Santa Fieri's role in this year's lobbying, but let those who have not lost in recognizing to lovers cast the first stone. Let us all recognize Elaine's qualities before dropping her for weaknesses we all share.

I personally hope that Elaine learns from her experience. Yet I shall continue, always, to thank her for her commitment in or out of office. Such commitment extends beyond politics, in fact from a gay woman to a gay man it extends beyond sex. Elaine continues to be more than a passive demonstration that politics and homosexuality are not mutually exclusive. She may be held to account for her politics, as David's article holds her, but she need not account for more.

Yours,

Joe Beckmann



noble and the bill

Dear GCN:

As office manager of Gay Legislation, I would like to state that Rep. Elaine Noble (despite Mr. Brill's article in the Oct. 22 issue) was at all times in complete agreement with G.L. She came to us before she did anything to get our opinion first. We knew everything she was doing, before she did it.

In my opinion Massachusetts would not even have gotten this far if it wasn't for Ms. Noble. And then what do we do? We stab her in the back when she's not looking. I also should point out that even though Rep. Frank was the first to introduce Gay Legislation in Mass. it wasn't until Ms. Noble was elected that it ever got out of Committee, and put to a vote.

I am deeply saddened that she is not running for re-election and I feel that the Mass. Gay com-

munity will suffer a great deal.

Sincerely,

Tom Connolly

(Ed.'s Note: As a point of fact, the bill did make it out of committee in 1973 and 1974 and was voted upon in the House in 1974, where it received as many as 90 votes — prior to Elaine Noble's first election. The writer of this letter is writing as an individual and not as a spokesperson for Gay Legislation '77.)

profound thanks

Dear GCN:

I would like to express my profound thanks to your paper and in particular to David Brill for his fine coverage of the Massachusetts gay rights bill. Comparing the October 22 and 29 GCN to the October 28 *Esplanade*, it is quite obvious that Mr. Brill is a professional who knows his subject, while the latter publication's writer is, as he says, a "casual observer."

In 1975, while Representative Elaine Noble was in her first year as a legislator, gay rights was defeated in the Senate after passing the House.

In 1977, while Ms. Noble was in her third year as a legislator, gay rights passed the Senate (which they said would be more liberal, and was) but was defeated in the House.

There must be a reason for all this.

Again, thanks from a grateful and better-informed reader.

Very truly yours,

R. Mills

Boston

bullet-proof vest

Dear GCN:

Congratulations for printing what another reader asked you to print many weeks ago: "the truth."

A special note of thanks to Mr. Brill: I wish a bullet-proof vest.

Sincerely,

Joseph Pascucci

courageous act

Dear GCN:

David Brill's "Talking Politics" in this week's GCN was something that we were entitled to see a long time ago.

I congratulate GCN for having the courage to print it.

Sincerely,

Anne Cardillo

private lives and public events

Dear GCN:

Re: David Brill's *Talking Politics* in the Oct. 29 edition. I have been reading Mr. Brill's column in the GCN for as long as my subscription has run and for the most part found it good journalism, even when in disagreement I found it stimulating.

However, I think Mr. Brill's editors should have exercised their prerogatives more stringently in the column of the 29th. The private lives of public officials are not usually the public's business. Rep. Noble may have been responsible for some serious tactical errors. She may have alienated some friends and supporters; this is the stuff of political commentary; not who a particular individual may or may not sleep with.

To suggest through innuendo that political mistakes have been made because love has blinded a public figure is not only ungentlemanly, but bad journalism. It hardly lies in the purview of constructive criticism.

We are not strong enough yet to tear each other apart like this. If Joe Martin, who turned

NEWS EDITOR

GCN is looking for a full-time news editor. Journalistic experience, knowledge of gay politics necessary. \$70 a week salary. Anyone interested should call Neil at 426-4469.

RESPOND, RESPOND

In our October 29, we printed a questionnaire to be used by our advertising department. If you haven't done so already, we urge you to fill it out and mail it in as soon as possible. If you would like a copy of the questionnaire you may stop by the GCN office.

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me on to Ms. Noble years ago and from all accounts from legislators who frequently visit these jails did a magnificent job with Gay Legislation '77, has become disenchanted with the Representative it's for him to say so and not for Mr. Brill to suggest without a direct quote.

Thank you,
Jon C. Taylor

personal bloodletting

To the Editor:

What is left when honor is lost? David Brill's personal bloodletting of Elaine Noble and Santa Fareri ("Talking Politics" GCN, Oct. 29) leaves him only the satisfaction that he finally got to say everything he had stored up over the last four years, like a constipated whale who was finally given a cathartic. He lost his credibility as an objective political commentator, as a professional journalist and, I would suggest, he lost his honor.

In reading his diatribe I felt as if I was listening to a 10-year-old attempting to convince his classmates that everyone should hate the girl down the block because she had more marbles than he did. I kept expecting to read next that Elaine still wets the bed and Santa picks her nose in public.

Since arriving in Boston a year and a half ago I have heard Brill's name always in connection with his running feud with Elaine Noble. Having experienced my own personal struggles with other gay "notables," I was comfortable with their tension so long as the entire gay community was not dragged into it. David's feelings apparently ran deep and wide but as a professional journalist and as an individual who is believed to be concerned about the community, he disappoints and angers me when he chooses to unleash his venom in the public market. Why would he stoop to conquer? What redeeming value did his comments have?

Perhaps most irksome and mind-boggling is Brill's easy reference to Elaine and Santa's al-

leged relationship. While unwritten, there is a highly respected rule amongst writers for gay publications that a person's private life is sacred unless he or she chooses to make it public. David's reference was not only unnecessary and irresponsible but could prompt family problems. If we don't like a person's politics, let us constructively say so, but leave the home life out of it.

David Brill, you surprise me, but then, as you conclude "Maybe everyone just expected more than they should have."

Brian McNaught

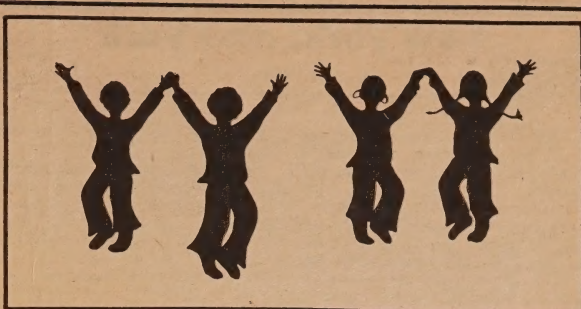
elaine's mantle

Dear GCN:

Ms. Noble, when elected state Rep. Noble, was a hopeful symbol for gay persons everywhere, thanks to the attentions of the national press. Gay New Englanders took special pride that it happened *here* first. She was well aware of the potency of that symbolism while campaigning. Once in office she jetted around the country keeping that symbolism alive. Her presence brought hope to many people who had previously let their cynicism get the better of them. She partly assumed, and mostly had thrust upon her, the mantle of the gay spokesperson. The flood of media exposure was a unique chance to broaden the struggle, to give credit where credit was due and to attract the masses of apolitical gay persons to the cause for gay civil rights.

The limelight suddenly focused on Elaine Noble and she did not resist this personal identification. Rarely has she given credit, even to the nearly two-dozen co-sponsors of the bill, much less to other gay groups or activists.

Lately, Elaine has complained through the press of the demands made on her to be the gay spokesperson, which is ironic in light of her attempts to single-handedly carry the banner. She has kept her distance from the "little people" and preferred the company of the legislative "bigshots." Her irritating inaccessibility, due to a busy travel schedule, has brought on numerous instances of faulty communications within the gay community.



Much of the problem seems to stem from a few blind loyalists around her who are bent on preserving the symbol of Elaine Noble and little else. The struggle is a *common* one and one that calls for clear lines of communication and candor. A defensive posture does not attract the much needed reserves of committed volunteers to do the real work required in getting legislation passed. It cannot be a one-person show.

I am a member of the Gay Legislation Steering Committee but my comments here are my own. I commend GCN for printing David Brill's article in the October 29 issue. In it are many points of criticism long overdue. Elaine Noble has been a symbol of hope to so many in the past and she can be once again if she will fight to have the House pass a tough ethics code before she leaves office next fall. She is on the committee considering

such a code and her legacy could be in her contribution toward seeing it enacted. Outside of the legislature there is much work to be done in educating gay persons about the legislative process and in organizing efforts to help re-elect those Reps. who stuck their necks out in support of H.3676.

Finally, Elaine said that one needs a "killer instinct" to remain in politics. That does disservice to some of her colleagues and it takes us back to where we were before Elaine Noble was elected — to a time when Gay persons were cynical about *any* progress in the political arena. That cynicism is justified as long as our only victories are *symbolic* victories.

In hope,
James L. McNearney

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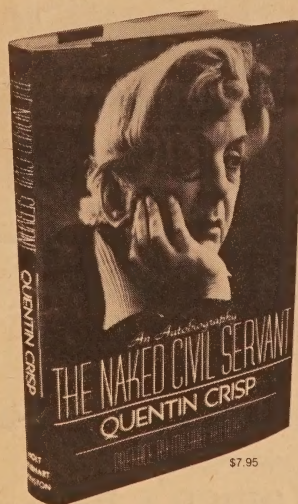
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ANDERSON WARD

new york, new york

By Harold Pickett

NEW YORK — Robert Rygor has declared his candidacy in the 1978 Democratic Primary for the State Assembly. His district includes the heavily gay Village area. Rygor's campaign literature stresses his concern for human rights "as a member of the N.A.A.C.P. and as an effective lobbyist and campaign activist for women and gay rights at all levels of government." His literature continues that "While completing his MBA in finance at New York University, he was national coordinator of Gays for Carter! and he is president of the Citizens Lobby for Human Rights."

While admiring the hard work and personal courage that Rygor has previously demonstrated, I must disagree with some of his positions, especially in his paper on "Crime." For example, it appears too risky to the cause of human rights to suggest as Rygor does that "the police make greater use of plainclothes officers" for preventing crime or to call for more "regulation over the manufacturing and prescribing" of drugs. A general tone of overreliance and respect for the State is too

evident in Rygor's papers for my comfort.

Nevertheless, Rygor is a gay candidate for public office. There are points of disagreement with all candidates and Rygor is certainly a person who's open to discussion and he is committed to feminist and gay rights. He is a person of integrity and dedication.

Rygor definitely needs campaign volunteers and contributions. The group Citizens for Rygor is located at 76 St. Mark's Place, #4-B, New York City 10003. For information, phone (212) 932-3139.

On Oct. 21-23, a coalition of activist groups conducted a "Public Hearing on the F.B.I.," called by the New York Citizen's Review Commission on the F.B.I. The three-day hearing held at Finley Student Center, City College of New York, drew participation from numerous organizations which, among others, included the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, the American Indian Movement, Clergy and Laity Concerned, the Grand Jury Project, and several African liberation groups. Gay participation was specifically requested

by the coordinators. Terry Turgeon spoke about the harassment she received in connection with the trial of Susan Saxe, mentioning the fact that the F.B.I. revealed her lesbianism to her family. David Thorstad discussed the prolonged efforts to gain files on the Gay Activists Alliance from the F.B.I. and also about what the role of disrupters and informers has been in the Gay Movement. One example Thorstad mentioned was that a disrupter would phone black organizations and tell them that their participation in gay meetings or demonstrations was not welcomed.

The mini-conference of the Gay Academic Union, scheduled for Nov. 12 at Hunter College after plans for the previously scheduled Indiana conference fell through, has been cancelled due to a lack of personnel to plan and run the event. However, a business meeting of the G.A.U. will be held at Hunter on Nov. 12. Wayne Dynes, announcing the cancellation, said that a regional California conference was still being held this year and that as the G.A.U. was a national organization in practice as well as in name, the West Coast area may become the center of future activities. Dynes informed me that the third issue of the G.A.U. journal, *Gai Saber*, is going to press soon. Subscription rates for the impressive journal are \$18 a year for the journal without G.A.U. membership, or \$12.50 for students sending a photostat of current student I.D., and \$30 for institutions. Order from Gay Academic Union, Box 480, Lenox Hill Station, New York City 10021.

Also, the 'Speak-Out' on Nov. 12,

occasioned by the appearance of Joseph Califano, Carter's HEW Secretary, at New York University, has been re-scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on the same day at Hunter College, at 68th St. and Lexington Ave. Some of the scheduled speakers are Frank Kameny, Jonathan Katz, David Thorstad, and Salie Herson. Mayoral candidates have been invited. Workshops are scheduled on the history of the NYC gay rights bill, how to fight for the bill, and how to get more people involved in the struggle.

Later Saturday evening, Nov. 12, there's a benefit dance for Gay Men's Alliance of Hunter College being held at the Inferno, located at 5 West 19th St. The benefit lasts from 10 p.m. till dawn. Admission is \$3 before midnight and \$5 after midnight. Be sure and mention "Hunter benefit" at the door.

Ian Young, Canada's leading nihilist, says he's refusing all interviews. He did say, however, I could print anything about him I choose "as long as it's negative!" His Nov. 14 poetry reading at New York University will be really bad!

Watch out for 'The Look,' a fantastic, new, and openly gay punk-rock group soon to premiere in New York City! 'The Look' consists of three gay men and a lesbian drummer and their entire entourage, including electricians, are all gay. Many of their songs are really sexy and I'm told the chances of a record contract are very good. They're already planning to tour the South this winter and want their last performance on the tour to be a free concert before an all-gay crowd and held in a Miami park. Is Anita ready for this?!

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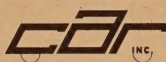
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600 Picket Rep. Hyde, Abortion Funding Foe

By Nancy Wechsler

FRAMINGHAM, MA — Over six hundred angry women, as well as many men, demonstrated outside the Chateau de Ville in Framingham on Saturday, Oct. 22. Inside, Henry Hyde, sponsor of a federal bill which would cut off medicaid funds for abortions, was speaking at a testimonial dinner organized by a right-wing "right-to-life" group.

"Wherever Hyde has appeared publicly he has been met by public protests. We didn't want this opportunity to pass us by," explained Eileen Hauck, a member of the Abortion Action Coalition which co-sponsored the demonstration with the Abortion Rights Coalition. Hauck went on, "We are here to demonstrate our outrage at all attempts to deprive women of our right to control our own bodies and lives. Henry Hyde represents to us an attempt to take away our right to abortion — and that's why we are out here picketing."

The picket started at 5:30 p.m. and remained lively and spirited till it ended some two hours later. Many rush hour commuters heard demonstrators chanting "abortion rights now!" and singing "Women have the right to live, women have the right to choose, women have the right to have a child and they have the right to refuse." The right to choose whether or not to have children came through as a major issue for the protesters. Beverly Smith, a black feminist and spokesperson for the Abortion Action Coalition, described it this way. "All of us think that women should have the right to decide what happens in our lives. Making a decision about having an abortion is

heavy, and it is influenced by so many things. The fact that women are often solely responsible for raising the children, that it is neither shared equally by men nor is their government funded community controlled day care — all these factors weigh heavily on a woman's decision whether or not she should have an abortion or try to raise the child," said Smith.

Many third world women turned out for this demonstration. Beverly Smith explained that "Poor people are most affected by eliminating medicaid money for abortions. A disproportionate number of third world women will be affected by these cuts — and that's one reason so many of us are here today. Before abortion was legal, more black women died at the hands of illegal abortionists. It is very insidious that white men [in Congress] are trying to control the lives of third world women. We see it as an issue of self determination."

Gay Presence

There were many lesbians and gay men at the demonstration, though few carried signs or buttons identifying themselves as gay. Beverly Smith said she felt gay people had come to support the demonstration because they "were aware of the links between this attempt at repression and the repression of gay men and lesbians. The anti-abortion movement is an attempt to limit and define women's sexuality, as the anti-gay movement is also an attempt to limit and define women's sexuality." She added that while it might seem that lesbians would be less likely to need abortions, all women faced the risk of pregnancy from rape.

Kathy Travers, a lesbian member of



Women protest Rep. Henry Hyde, who has been the leading proponent of a cut-off of federal medicaid funds for abortions. Hyde spoke at a Right to Life dinner in Framingham, Mass.

Photo by Nancy Wechsler

the Abortion Action Coalition, echoed Smith as she explained her reason for picketing Hyde. "The right to abortion is ultimately the right to control over your own sexuality. As a lesbian, I know that the same people who would stop women from having abortions would also like to stop gay people from feeling good about our sexuality and

stop us from expressing it in an open way."

The two sponsoring groups — the Abortion Action Coalition and the Abortion Rights Coalition — say they will continue to organize around these issues in the months to come. Anyone interested in reaching either group can call 492-4845.

Miami Gays Urge OJ Boycott

MIAMI, FLA. — Dade County's Gay Coalition has endorsed a national boycott of Florida orange juice in an attempt to force the Florida Citrus Commission to make a positive statement on the hiring and firing of gays. The Coalition had refused to support a boycott during the Dade County referendum campaign, fearing that the anti-gay forces would accuse them of trying to wreck the state's citrus-based

economy.

Paul Butler, chairperson of the Coalition's Boycott Committee, told GCN that the proposed boycott is not aimed at getting orange juice spokesperson Anita Bryant dismissed from her post. "We don't want to interfere with anyone's right to a job," Butler emphasized. The purpose of the boycott, he asserted, is simply to put

(Continued on page 11)

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SOMEWHERE

Rev. Marge Ragona Talks about

By Paula Bennett

On November 6, Marge Ragona, currently serving as exhorter at the Boston MCC, will be officially installed as pastor of the Providence MCC. This farewell interview with Marge occurred in the D.O.B. office at the Old Cambridge Baptist Church on Saturday, Oct. 22.

GCN: Let's start with something simple, like where were you born?

M.R.: New York. I grew up in New York City.

GCN: Did you live there all your life?

M.R.: No. I lived in New York until 1962. I had a lover in New Orleans. We carried on long distance for many years but in 1962 I moved down. I spent the next twelve years with her.

GCN: Were you in the Church then?

M.R.: My father is a Methodist minister. I grew up as close to the Church as a human being can get without actually being in it. When I was a kid we were at Church five nights a week and twice on Sundays. A tremendous number of people in MCC have had that kind of background. Many of the women are the children of ministers. Church for them is a kind of an extended family.

GCN: When did you come out?

M.R.: 1946. As a youngster, I planned to be a medical missionary. I am a registered nurse. I was planning to go from nursing school to Bible Training College but I came out while I was at nursing school (laughs). That blew my career, at least for a couple of years.

GCN: When did you marry?

M.R.: 1957. I got caught up in the gays are sick thing. In the course of seeing a psychiatrist I decided that there's more to us than what we know on the surface, that sexuality is a continuum and that there was some heterosexuality hidden away in me. I got married and had kids. My husband was a bisexual male going through very much the same process. He died when my youngest son was about thirteen months old.

GCN: Then he was not the father of your daughter?

M.R.: No. After I went down to New Orleans to join my lover I was involved in the Southern Baptist Church and there was a lot of social pressure — you can't raise two little boys by yourself — sort of thing. I guess I was feeling vulnerable. I remarried but after a few months I knew it wasn't going to work. However I was already pregnant so I stayed in the marriage long enough to get pregnant and then got out.

GCN: Is Missy's father still living?

M.R.: Yes.

GCN: Does he see her?

M.R.: No. He was so furious when he found out I was gay, he came back, turned off his lights and the gas, packed up his belongings and has never been heard of since.

GCN: How do your kids feel about your being gay?

M.R.: My oldest son is totally accepting and a little amused — he figures "that's mother." He doesn't mind discussing relationships because he's old enough to have his own sexuality in hand. Johnny, the next youngest, also feels it's my life and I can lead it my own way but he is a little embarrassed. He has a way to go himself and he hasn't sorted out how he really feels — his ideas are still forming and sometimes he gets angry.

GCN: And your daughter?

M.R.: Missy grew up in MCC and until recently was always very accepting and very open. But she ran into homophobia for the first time after a TV interview and it affected her school per-

formance. We finally went to counseling. She is better now but it definitely put distance between us. She sees my being gay as something threatening to her which it never was before. It has put a kink in our relationship.

GCN: Do you regret having let her go on T.V.?

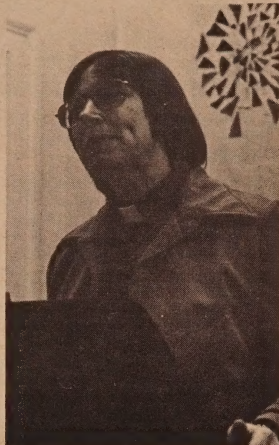


photo by Amette Cagne

Rev. Marge Ragona at a recent MCC service in Providence.

M.R.: (After a pause) Not really. What I regret is people's attitudes. We did the right thing but I regret that the world is the way it is. (Pause) It was a bad scene and it has also affected her relationship with my lover. She really resents her now and she's taking her anger at me out on her.

GCN: How long have you two been together?

M.R.: About two years.

GCN: Has the business with your daughter affected your relationship with her?

M.R.: Not really. We are understanding it and going through it together. All gay mothers fight with their lovers about the kids. People who don't have kids are always experts (laughs) and love to tell you what you're doing wrong.

GCN: Do you ever find yourself torn between them?

M.R.: Sometimes. There are times when I have to make a decision between what my lover wants and what my daughter wants. But I don't think that's unique to the gay scene. Children are great little manipulators. They know what they want and they'll see to it that they get it.

GCN: Did you ever get any feedback on the T.V. show itself?

M.R.: Not much. Relatively few people must have seen it.

GCN: Getting back to MCC, how long have you been in Boston?

M.R.: About a year. I came up to do a student ministry position at MCC Boston.

GCN: What's that?

M.R.: That's like an internship.

GCN: You were the student then?

M.R.: Yes. In MCC this is called an exhortership. I had been in a student position in New York and had gotten myself in a lot of difficulties over the feminist issue.

GCN: What happened?

M.R.: I was seen as an angry woman (Have you heard of this one before?) and got myself in enough difficulty so that I was turned down for the ministry and they suggested that I find another Church to work in. Ed Hougen ap-

parently didn't find me that threatening however. He asked me to come up and work with him in Boston.

GCN: Did you have to go through the whole student program again?

M.R.: Yes. But Ed never treated me as anything but an assistant minister. He gave me the freedom I needed to find myself and to work with people in my own way.

GCN: Why are you leaving?

M.R.: Because MCC Providence is without a pastor. I've had a good relationship with the Providence Church for a number of years and when Rev. Joseph Gilbert left there about six months ago he had asked me to take the Providence Church. At the time I couldn't because I had made a commitment to MCC Boston. But when their next pastor also left I got worried about them. There are people there I care about.

GCN: Have you got a job down there as well?

M.R.: NO. I'm going to keep my job here and commute, at last temporarily.

GCN: Five days a week?

M.R.: It's only an hour away.

GCN: You know people here are going to miss you.

M.R.: I know I'm well-liked (pause). One of the things I will miss is the really good working relationship with the gay activists here. They're nice people.

GCN: You're talking about the men or the women or both?

M.R.: I haven't had as much time to work with the women's community here as I would have liked. There are only twenty-four hours in a day. With the Anita Bryant thing I felt I had to deal with that issue first. Coming from my background I felt I had the knowledge to deal with where she was coming from and what she was saying.

GCN: Do you feel that the Anita Bryant business affected the latest Supreme Court decision and the fate of the House bill?

M.R.: Oh yes. The success in Dade County gave the far Right a go-ahead to use this as an issue any way they could.

GCN: How do you see it actually affecting the court?

M.R.: Two things are involved in the Supreme Court decision: Carter's being in the White House and deciding not to speak out on gay issues and Anita Bryant's work. Together they have promoted a climate of oppression against gays.

GCN: What do you view as our priority concerns in Boston now?

M.R.: I think the priority issue is to educate the straight community. Things like the Gay Speakers Bureau's involvement with the PTA's. If people know enough then they won't buy into attacks like the Save Our Children campaign, but that means making oneself vulnerable and visible, taking chances, speaking to straight people personally and publicly. At MCC we've been working for a year now, going out and being a presence in the straight churches. We sent a group of our people to a church where they involved themselves completely in the on-going work of the Church. We attended every meeting we could possibly attend and when it was possible to legitimately do so, we made them aware of what they were doing and we finally did get them to sit down with us and we changed some minds. Some of us went to the Park Street Church Institute of Christian Studies and sat in on their sexual ethics course. We were able to speak out on the feminist issue, on abortion and on homosexuality.

The Church bolsters all too often the worst things about people instead of the best: their hatreds, and feelings of superiority. What we're trying to do is get it to bolster the best things.

GCN: But why bother?

M.R.: Just as you say you're Jewish and that's your cultural baggage — being a Christian is mine and I just can't walk away from it and say it never happened. It isn't just the way I believe. It has to do with my ethical precepts, how I spend my time. It's part of my life, my belief structure.

GCN: You say this, even knowing all the oppression Christianity has caused?

M.R.: I know that the Church has been and often is oppressive. The difficulty is that the Church and the State have tied together using each other. But that's not what religion is all about. In the same way that Judaism is not just the picky legalism it sometimes seems to be, neither is Christianity totally what it is perceived to be. There is a core there which can make a profound change in a human personality.

GCN: Yes, but Christianity claims to save or damn.

M.R.: No it doesn't. Christianity can liberate — that's what salvation is, liberation, liberation from damnation, from alienation, and liberation from the things that divide you from yourself and you from other people. The trouble is we hear those words from rabid fundamentalists who use them as weapons and they don't tell the story. There are a lot of people for whom religious faith provides enormous inner strength. It's too good to waste. Real Baptists — not the Anita Bryant variety — are very much aware of the liberation that comes from salvation.



Women, Christianity, Politics

GCN: Getting back to the Boston community, do you find there's less division here between the men and women?

M.R.: Not less division but less hostility. When you go to meetings there are still only the one or two women there — not at the community meetings — but at the small working meetings. But there's a lot less hostility. Maybe because of the Dade County thing, we're all a lot more in it together than we were a few years ago.

GCN: Do you feel women are not pulling their weight?

M.R.: No. I think they're fighting a different war. They have to fight the feminist issue and the gay issue. Most have decided the more important battle is the feminist issue. If gay men realized that most of the oppression they suffer is also rooted in sexism, they would be more understanding of women's priorities. We are women 24 hours a day and we meet assaults on that moment by moment each day. We need to work on both fronts but a lot of the time when women do try to work in the gay movement they get the same assault as in the straight movement so it makes it unrewarding. But it isn't like that here in Boston. The gay male community here is sensitive to our problems and they are willing to accept criticism, sometimes even take the blame more than they deserve — if you put it to them in a non-threatening way. I know that it's hard to put aside your anger when you're just coming in to it — as many women are — but sometimes being funny helps.

Women can do a lot to help, particularly on the issue of child molestation. The largest number of schoolteachers are women and if they would keep

saying over and over again: look I am gay, I am a schoolteacher, I don't molest little children — it would help.

GCN: In light of the recent Supreme Court decision that might be a little risky.

M.R.: They want to scare us back into the closet but those of us who don't have anything to lose by being visible can for a while carry on more than our share because we are not vulnerable.... We have been thrown back to the point where we have to do the same old things all over again but we can do them with larger numbers being visible now.

GCN: How do your parents feel about your activism?

M.R.: I'm not in touch with my parents very much these days. My father is seventy-eight years old, a retired minister, and he's coming from the same place Anita Bryant is so I sort of stay away.

GCN: And your mother?

M.R.: I don't know where my mother is. She left home just after I was born.

GCN: Will you maintain any ties with Boston?

M.R.: All MCC churches are tied together both by district and national ties. Ed Houghton will be district coordinator and Boston, Providence and Worcester work together closely anyway.

GCN: How many people are in the Boston MCC?

M.R.: There are about 75 or 77 members. Generally 80 to 90 people attend services.

GCN: And in Providence?

M.R.: Generally 35 to 40 attend services. People may not be willing to admit it but MCC is the largest gay organization in the world.

GCN: Is there any doctrine?

M.R.: No doctrine. We have a statement of faith which almost any Christian except maybe a Unitarian (we're trinitarian) could subscribe to. We recognize we are dealing with adult believers and we don't try to restructure someone's existing belief so we are ecumenical.

GCN: Is there any sexism in MCC?

M.R.: The sexism depends on the district. The MCCs in the Northeast district have relatively little largely because the women have fought like mad for the last three years against it. MCC women have come out with this book — Jenny Bull is the editor and I edit one section — called "Feminist Views of Christianity" where we have dealt with sexism in the Church and the anti-woman bias in Christianity generally.

GCN: What form does sexism take?

M.R.: One of the things is the language of the Church which is enormously oppressive to women. We have been working on an inclusive language for all MCC. And then, of course, the way ministers get to be ministers, coming through the educational process. Since women aren't accepted into seminaries — there can't be the same number of trained women available so women are sliding into the MCC ministry through the back door with degrees in other fields like counselling or history. They have to pick up their theological education later.

GCN: Does MCC accept the credentials of ministers from other denominations?

M.R.: Yes.

GCN: Do you plan to stay in Providence permanently?

M.R.: MCC ministers are pretty mobile. It's exceedingly hard work. The minister not only ministers to a congregation with a number of needs and strong opinions on what a minister



Photo by Annette Gagne

ought to be but the minister is also a leader in the gay community. After a period of time, there's usually a need for change or rest so a lot of our people will either choose a change of scene or a period of rest and recreation to keep their heads together. But I have a contract till August '79 which I intend to honor.

GCN: The high rate of turnover has struck me, just here in Boston.

M.R.: A lot of that is stopping now. The Church has been growing rapidly and a lot of people were being sent out to start new churches. Now we have MCC stabilization and growth in the local churches rather than establishing new ones.

GCN: What are your goals in Providence?

M.R.: That Church has about eight gay mothers and 17 children and I'd like very much to work with them and provide leadership for the youngsters. We have kids from six months to 17 or 18 years of age. It's time we let our kids out of the closet. They need to know each other, other kids who live the same way. It would make it easier for them to deal with their mothers' gayness, to have other kids to play with who live in the same situation. I think my daughter has suffered from not having another friend her age with a gay parent who is out and dealing with her gayness.

GCN: Has the MCC been recognized by other Churches?

M.R.: MCC Boston was unanimously turned down by the Mass. Council of Churches but MCC Providence was accepted by the Rhode Island Council of Churches.

GCN: How do you explain the difference?

M.R.: I think the absence of strong fundamentalist groups in the Rhode Island Council of Churches and probably the fact that Protestants in general are a smaller group in Rhode Island than the Catholics. They are, therefore, not willing to give up any group — they need the solidarity. Also MCC Providence has earned its stripes. It has been working with the disabled, people in nursing homes, the deaf, through the ministry of Rev. Michael Nordstrom.

GCN: Do you feel any conflict in yourself between your various roles: femin-

ist, minister, and gay woman?

M.R.: The one thing MCC has permitted me to do is to put all of me in one place, gay, feminist and Christian. I can work on all three things and it's the best thing that's happened to my personality. The joy of being in MCC is that I can take all three and put them together and use them to deal with the same issue. Before entering MCC, I felt fragmented. It's very hard being a Christian and a feminist and gay. It's been a real experience to meet other Christian feminist lesbians within MCC and to work with them and with other Christian feminists who are not gay. One of the exciting things about being a Christian feminist is that we are really closer to where the action is. We are changing attitudes from within that will change attitudes without.

GCN: To me Christian-feminist sounds like a contradiction in terms.

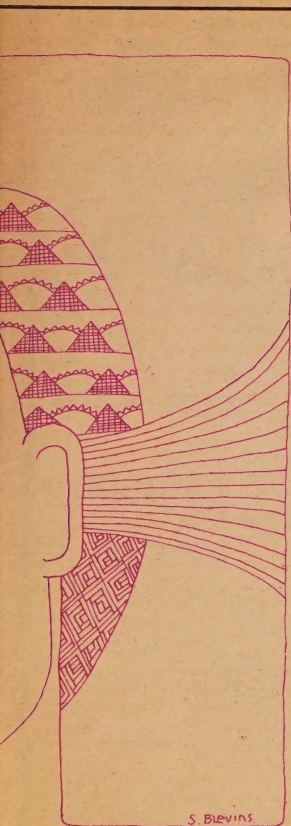
M.R.: Not when you look at them closely. When you look at the gospels there is nothing anti-woman in them. Only Paul is anti-woman and even he contradicts himself when he says in Christ there is no male and no female. Christianity gets shaped by the civilization it is happening in. Christianity is not anti-female but one will have to undo centuries of interpreters who have made it seem anti-female because they themselves were.

GCN: Do you think of Christ as male?

M.R.: No. I think he was a very androgynous figure. I don't think of God as a male God. As I like to say in service, I am more interested in his reedership than his phallus. When you deal with Jesus the historical figure who once lived, you have only two choices, male or female. But Christ is a title which means anointed one (not he or she).... What we are working on is lessening the number of male analogies for God and increasing the number of female or non-gender ones.

GCN: One last question, do you think there will always be lesbian mothers?

M.R.: There will always be women who discover themselves after they have been married. I don't think it's just our society that makes us mothers though. We have a need to be maternal. Having a child is a wonderfully rich and rewarding experience. I wouldn't have missed it for anything.



Lesbian Mothers on Film — A Critique

By Tina LaConte

In The Best Interests of The Children is a film-collection of interviews and discussions with lesbian mothers, their children, a legal expert and a psychologist, the last two of whom are women. The pacing and light color photography are comfortable and relaxing to watch.

A series of case studies unfolds the problems of lesbian mothers: the legal system that protects antiquated, bigoted traditions before turning to face the rights of the individual and the ignorant attitudes that are perpetuated by a society vainly attempting to structure itself with values a century out of date.

Basically, though, the film relaxes and reveals the growth and energy that result from interdependence and supportiveness within the family system. The mothers place a great emphasis on self-awareness, and their children interviewed in the film express attitudes from tolerance to whole-hearted acceptance of their mothers' lesbianism. None of the children seem threatened or emotionally stunted by the abnormality of their homelife. In fact, they are consistently articulate, self-confident children ready to express themselves.

The film is an undeniably positive statement. The candid, unscripted interviews are a series of intimate, sharing scenes between mothers and their children. Each shot is sustained by some mutual involvement, whether it be card-playing, duck-feeding, or cooking, between mother and child. Such action, it appears, is an excellent tool for relaxing the subjects and allowing them to openly discuss their lives.



Iris Films representatives Frances Reid and Elizabeth Stevens talking about lesbians and film at a recent showing of *In The Best Interests of the Children*.

Photo by Nancy Wechsler

There are no teary squabbles, ugly confrontations between mother and child, and no hostile confusion. The only frustrations are unseen and alluded to as necessary in order that insight and growth may evolve. As curious onlookers, though, we are not allowed to see these essential internal battles. This omission nips at the credibility of the film. Such cheery, tranquil positivism is unnerving to those of us sensitive to the reality of the human struggle for identity and understanding. Quite simply, the film is propaganda.

The filmmakers were present at the showing. They asserted that such a warm, casual approach to the situation

of lesbian mothers was necessary in order to capture the audience of potentially hostile, or at least defensive, non-believers to whom the film is directed. With the understanding that all statements are to some degree biased, this blatant admission of propaganda is not offensive.

The film is sincere. Its argument is consistent and, I believe, sound. The scenes, though continually positive, intimate and supportive, are nonetheless honest, candid scenes. Sweeping aside the negative aspects is merely avoiding confusion. Education is a slow, careful process and the makers of the film are striving to respectfully enlighten the more narrow-minded of

their sisters and brothers.

But the assumption underlying an attitude which states that we must hide the ugliness in order to convince our audience is tainted with a trace of superiority. I believe that this oversimplification has weakened the film's basic argument. The valuable message may well be compromised when an already skeptical viewer asks, "Can they really be all that happy?" In this sense, the film, very subtly, falls prey to the illusion of the "happily-ever-after" ending.

Overall, the film is pleasant and educational, explaining the lifestyle of the lesbian mother, her adaptation and struggles. The use of "real" people works to help the viewer identify with the issue, and the film has a genuine, personal feeling. The three women from the Iris Film Collective who put the film together spent a year collecting data and a year compiling their footage before they began touring the country with their work. The response from what they term "sympathetic audiences" has been very good.

Men in the film are quite villainized by their roles as arbitrary authority figures in law and as power-hungry husbands. I understand the attitude behind these images. But why, I wonder, did the feminist filmmakers completely ignore the issue of gay men raising or claiming custody of their children? I realize the film's subject is "lesbian mothers" but perhaps a line or two exploring parallel struggles may have been, at the least, interesting.

The issue of whether or not a lesbian mother will be awarded custody of her children is as much a gay issue as it is a woman's issue. Somewhere in this



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Lesbian Mothers

(Continued from previous page)

great, wide land of ours there must be a gay man who, although he lives and wants his children, was forced to relinquish them to their mother, a woman who may not be ready to give them as much love as he. The oppression of our male-dominated society has equally destructive influences on both women and men. This is an important, humanitarian concept which the film has passed by.

In an attempt to justify the lesbian mother, I believe the film has denied the possibility of men being as loving, or perhaps even more willing to give his energy towards his children, than a woman may be. This undertone of sexism (i.e., women must raise the children, they are the nurturing, healing sex), as well as the general negativity towards men in the film, chills my ideals.

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Robin Morgan reading her poetry for a Sojourner benefit held last Sunday, Oct. 23 at the Old Cambridge Baptist Church.

Dade County

(Continued from page 7)

pressure on the Citrus Commission to change its hiring practices. If the boycott succeeds in this aim, the Coalition would then call for its termination.

The decision to launch the boycott came after the Florida Citrus Commission refused to answer requests from the Coalition to make a statement on its gay employment policies. In addition, Walter J. Kautz, president of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation — a group which includes the major citrus growers in the state — wrote an article in the September issue of *Florida Agriculture* calling for open gay people to "crawl back into the hills." Kautz castigated homosexuality as "not normal" and "not natural." Singer Bryant is scheduled to be a main speaker at the Farm Bureau's November 6-8 convention in Orlando.

According to the Gay Coalition's Butler, the Coalition has mailed petitions around the country which urge the Citrus Commission to endorse the "human rights" of all its employees. The organizers hope to present 1,000,000 signatures at the Farm Bureau Federation meeting in November.

"We need nationwide support for this effort, both in terms of refusing to buy orange juice and in terms of the petitions," said Butler. "This is the way we can put pressure on the Citrus Commission to change its hiring policies. It's a timelimited boycott and it can work."

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The All-Gay Gallery Reopens in R.I.

By Richard Bump

"It's like coming home!" This attitude appeared to be shared by the majority of people present at the reopening of the Gallery in Providence, R.I. last Wednesday, the 19th. For many of us the reopening brought back memories of the old Gallery we knew before the heterosexual invasion of the popular disco which began about a year ago.

Next month the Gallery will be celebrating its fifth anniversary. In these five years both the Gallery and the Providence gay community in general have seen many changes.

When the Gallery opened in 1972 it was the first real gay dance bar in Rhode Island. With the exception of fag-hags the clientele was exclusively gay men. The bar was extremely successful, attracting people from all over

southern New England. The Gallery filled a need within the gay community. It was a place — if only an extended closet — to be gay and feel free.

Later straight men began to frequent the Gallery which made the gay customers uncomfortable. Former owner Bob Thibault tried several times to rid the Gallery of the heterosexual element. All attempts failed.

This summer, under doctor's orders, Thibault sold the bar to bartender Roland Lamothe. It was closed for two weeks for renovations and a new admission policy was instituted.

On opening — or rather reopening — night I spoke to Roland. He explained the new policy at the door. Invitation cards may be picked up every day after 2 p.m. These cards will be distributed at Roland's discretion, are non-transferable and can be revoked without notice. Cover charge is \$2.00 on weeknights, \$3.00 Friday and Saturday.

There were a few physical changes in the bar. The decor, lights, etc., were slightly altered. Security has been beefed up, both outside and inside, to protect the safety and well-being of the bar's patrons. But the biggest change is that the bar was nearly 100% gay on reopening night. There was a large percentage of lesbians present, the atmosphere was electric and the people friendly. I was amazed by the number

of people present. You actually had to elbow your way to the dance floor — something that you haven't had to do at the Gallery in too long a time.

The new owner, Roland, appears to be determined to keep the bar all gay. There are currently negotiations with several gay circuit performers, including Wayland Flowers, to perform in the upstairs Cabaret Room.

I also spoke to Bob Thibault. He explained how the bar had gradually turned straight. "You start with one gay kid. He brings a fag hag who brings her girlfriend who in turn invites her straight boyfriend. Before you know it, you've got three straights to one gay." Although Thibault admits he was still making a profit with a straight clientele, he boasts of the Gallery being the only gay bar solely owned, operated and staffed by gays. He thinks gays should support each other and says the future of the bar is the responsibility of its patrons.

The opening night crowd was impressed by the large turnout and appreciative of the return of gays to the Gallery. Many were hesitant to predict whether or not the Gallery will remain gay, but everyone agreed the success of the venture is largely up to them.

Although I am not advocating complete separation, it is comforting to pause in the struggle for liberation and come home to a Gallery surrounded by our gay sisters and brothers.



Photo by Angela Russo

Julia and David present an exhilarating performance that should not be missed. See them Fridays and Saturdays at the Club '76 after 10 p.m.

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people, places and flings

By Francis Toohey

Colette's is one of the stranger Cinderella stories — born a male, she went on to become a woman through surgery while still in her teens, apprenticed then as the only female to regularly perform a strip-tease in a gay club, and finally opened her first one-woman show, *Here I Am*, at *Together* Tuesday night. For an act that looks at first glance to be so much pantomime-to-records, there's surprising imagination and care at work often enough and enough going on to solicit some exploration...

The key word for *Here I Am* might be vulnerability. Colette knows what her liabilities are — inexperience and the potential monotony of pantomime. As a result, she's worked toward overcoming them with frequent changes of mood, costume, character and props, while employing an instinct for turning this vulnerable quality into a means for manipulating the audience. The spirit behind all of this is the friendly ghost of so many off-Broadway musical revues from several years back. Colette consistently commands our interest in a way that only young, open-ro-risk performers can — if something doesn't quite work out, the vitality of the bounce-back is exhilarating.

Here I Am's breakable fairytale tone with its choice of fragile Bernadette Peters-type material, its *Godspell* clown, the tiny pinwheels and giveaway candy and play money, strikes an oddly evocative asymmetry with Colette's dramatic *Sophia Loren* looks. From the first, when she inter-



The Fabulous Sex Change Colette at the opening of her one-woman show at *Together*.

photo by Joseph Glavin

rets the line: *I wouldn't change a thing if I had to live my life all over*, while holding up her scarf to catch projected images of herself at work and play — it's obvious that there's a finger on a definite pulse. What Colette's striving for is a certain exquisite quality in the tradition of *Giulietta Masina* in *Fellini's La Strada*. With a tightening of the timing and better orchestration of the stage effects, some of the same is potentially within Colette's reach. She has some talent as a mime, but she needs that experience behind her. The sincerity of the effort is apparent in the

fresh excitement, like all those kids' barnyard productions portrayed in so many *Judy Garland/Mickey Rooney* pictures. Let's say right now that a star is not born so much as she is well-conceived and on her way...

We went to *Paradise* a week ago and found it somewhat better than our Judeo-Christian upbringing had led us to expect — it's a gay saloon! The decor is less than heavenly but with the longest bar in this or any other world and the English Pub-sized beers, this Cambridge spot ought to make more than its share of converts... *Styx* had a lovely-to-look-at third anniversary party last week with bartender *David Graham* popping off all over the place with the free champagne, turning up behind us every time we drained our glass with a pinch and more poured. My ex-Nightfall pal, *Lo-Rain Dudley*, was on hand with the *hors d'oeuvres*... *Bruce Jope* and I celebrated our own third the same evening, finding ourselves in Chinatown with that old money-bag, *Mr. Sylvia Sidney* who generously picked up the tab... *Bruce* presented me with a set of three boxes from *Grasshopper* of Charles Street — each of them heart shaped of Japanese lacquer, each fitting within another, one for each year... *Don C. Hanover III* is in Fort Lauderdale this week as the guest of the *Marlin Beach Hotel*. It seems they like his work so much, they invited him to come on down, all expenses paid, to do their publicity photographs... Those of you who remember *Tom Nylund* from the Fenway Community Health Center will be pleased to hear that Tom's been appointed director of the Gay Community Services' VD control program out in Los Angeles... Happy tenth to *The Advocate* while we're out in the area... Over Worcester-way we see

Isaiah's, a new bar for cruising only, has opened at 11 Thomas Street... *Colette* will have some competition at the *Boston Repertory Company* now that mime *Gary Shore's* show, *The Outcast*, is back downtown... And the darkly sensual compositions of *Joan Armatrading* will be filling Symphony Hall Nov. 15 when that woman comes to town... *Phoebe Snow's* fans will be all in a flurry when she comes down at *Don Law's* new *Paradise* Nov. 8, 9 and 10... If you're not planning a trip to the Big Apple, start now because *David Hockney* is having a rare show of new paintings, drawings and prints at *Emmerich Gallery*, 41 E. 57th Street through the 16th... While you're down there you might check to see if *The New York Times* has been cold-bloodedly stealing any more of *GCN's* review headlines... If poor *Truman Capote* had only imagined what the gods' response would be to his *Answered Prayers!* Well, the preface to that work, a book called *The Dogs Bark: Public People and Private Lives*, is now available in paperback from *Plume*... I wonder if there's a ban in Boston on the late *Pier Paolo Pasolini's* last film, *Salò: 120 Days in Sodom?* It's scheduled nowhere as far as I can see... I heard that critic *Rex Reed* thought the late director's death in the embrace of a hustler was something along the lines of just rewards for the above film's depravity... *Rex* ought to keep his judgments where they're most suited — *TV's Gong Show*... I love it... The *Rhode Island Community Services* and the *Lesbian Feminist Union* is sponsoring a series of coffeehouses at Brown University's *Big Mother Coffeehouse*... Producer *Lois* is auditioning new talent for the series and the first is Nov. 20... Call 401-944-4544... Till next week.



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So, how was the return flight? Loved seeing you. Do not be immoral. Go back to Ha Michbacha. They need you. Give my love to Rob when you see him. PSTPHD sends her love.

GWF looking for Fem 31-40. If you consider yourself a challenge, answer my ad. Must like driving. No heavy drugs. Like kids. Send photo. Write P.O. Box 77, Fitchburg, MA 01420. (21)

TED JACOB • 5:27 PM NOV 2
Happy birthday. Down the corridors of my mind, across misty memories I retrace the paths you made... and wish we were together XXXM. (18)

GF seeking gay friends—women & men. Share time, mutual interests. No smoke, res, drink. Live in country prefer simple folk. Lived in S. Am. 4 yrs. GCN Box 838. (18+)

ALONE IN PLYMOUTH

Looking for other gay persons in the Plymouth/Cedarville/Buzzards Bay area for companionship—socializing, especially a male 18 to 30 to possibly share house. Send name, address phone # to P.O. Box 1663, Buzzards Bay, MA 02532. (19)

KEENE, NH AREA

GM, 30, new to So. Western NH seeks intelligent and attractive gay friends. Write KED, P.O. Box 279, Fitzwilliam, NH 03447. (17+)

DEAR DAVID IN CAMBRIDGE

Happiest Birthday. Sorry we could not B there with U. We love you. Your 2 weenies up North E & J. (17)

SHYISOLATED IN BOSTON?

Quiet, friendly student, new to area, seeks males, 23-35 preferred. I'm 22, 5'6"; br; slim; Chicano; liberal views; conservative, scholarly appearance. Reside Cambridge. Enjoy films, popular music, dancing, conversation. Seek mature, sensitive male who enjoys sharing good times. If you aren't huge or obese, looks and race unimportant. I'm not pushy; we could simply share a dinner or go dancing. Anything more, welcome, but not expected. Write me about yourself, your interests and desires, and send me proposals. Out of your place only. No preps, ego-manics, robotomized musclemen, midlife crises. I can't guarantee a reply, but it won't hurt to try! GCN Box 836. (18)

CLOSET WOMEN

If you care about what happens to gays and want to contribute in some way, please contact Nancy at GCN Box K77. Give me some non-revealing way of getting in touch with you. Please make suggestions about how you think women in the closet can make some impact on the political scene without being exposed or uncomfortable in any way. Thanks very much. (12)

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I live alone in rural setting, culturally lively central NE area far from small family of yng children. Poor but self-supporting in industry, semi-professional in human services, college education, vegetable farming, non-smoking & drugs, little alcohol, I like to converse, I am close, sensitive, private times, dancing, total loving relationship with sex, outside interests. Would you be mature, educated, responsible, affectionate, alive to several interests, honest, open, with sense of humor & love of home life & healthy activities? Please write; I promise you an answer. GCN Box 832 (19)

GWF 28, would love to meet fem, or sexy appr. GWF for a very warm & affectionate relationship! Please respond to GCN Box 805. (18)

GWM woodworker, 37, seeks mature younger GWM, possibly as helper/apprentice, to share simple country life in Vermont. Photo, please. GCN Box 831. (17)

R U tired of standing around bars, 1 nite stands and the instability of the world love? If U value honesty & sensitivity, be heard! BGM 21, 5'9" in So NH sks masc GM 21-26 to dvp a relationship based on the foundation of caring. Please write PO Box 875, Merrimack, NH 03054. (17)

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If you wish to respond to a box number in any of our ads, send to GCN Classifieds, Box 22, 22 Bromfield St., Boston MA 02108.

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roommates

Clean, discreet roommate wanted to share "Showcase" apt w/2 nonlover GWMs. Own rm & kitchen & laundry facilities. \$38/wk + phone. Call Al at 666-9697. (18)

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GWM teacher has large 2 bedroom apt to share with similar professional GWM. Your share 165. 227-3782. Call between 4-6 pm. Keep trying. (19)

Roommate—Beacon Hill 2 bdrm, mod kit, bath, exposed bk, d.d., must be non-smoker, and very independent. 523-4374. (19)

GM looking for home w/2-4 GM in Camb. area. I am col lover, plant lover, student of occult. Leave message for Lester at GCN 426-8752. (19)

Prof mature F seeks same to split 2 ways 3 bdr elegant Brookline Apt. Call 530-701/277-2789. (18+)

M wants 1-2 M inmates for Nov. 1. Brighton spacious apt, 2 fam hse, 100/mo + utls. Call Gabe, 254-2310. (18+)

GWM ROOMMATE WANTED
To share with same large 7 room home. Has 2 car garage, fireplace, w/d, dishwasher & is completely furnished. 170/mo incl all utls. Call 588-1408, ask for Fred. (19)

1 F needed to make 4th in co-op. les. fem. spacious hld. in Davis Sq. Conv. to trans. Congenial easy-going women. \$86 + utls. 628-6588. (19)

Prisnal GWM 30 looking 4 a nonsmoking responsible person 2 split 2 ways 3 bed lux apt 6 miles north of Bos! Utilities furnished, ans. service, gym, parking!! I did not put this ad-N 4 sex! I pref a student or educated gay WM or WFI! No lease need month plus month nadv! Is! \$300 M each 322-1162 (call 5-7pm only) (13+)

2 lesbians need 3rd to complete quiet, sunny, 3 bdr apt in w/d w/porches, res. area—Oak Sq. Bri, mostly veg., no cigs, rent 95/m + utls. 782-3539. (18)

Belmont—2 women, 1 man need 2 rmtes to share 5 bdrm apt. Rent \$90/mo + utls & sex dep. near Tr. Friendly, open atmosphere. Avail. Oct. 15. (617) 628-5474 Conna or Bruce. (15+)

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Male lead wanted for reviews. Some stage exp. nec. Call 289-8368, 284-5476. Ask for Chris or Jerry. Only serious need apply. Call 127 p.m. (7)

misc

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A trio of bold and erotic stories: Solo Homage to Priapus, Phallomania, illustrated brochure, one dollar. Waynesart, Dept. 42, 28 SE 9th St., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316. (18)

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We have a few spaces left in our 12 week Personal Growth group for Gay Women. This group offers a safe and supportive environment in which you can define and explore issues that are important in your life. The group will meet Monday nights from 7:30-9pm at Homophile Community Health Service, 60 Boylston St., Rm 855, Boston. Pre-group interview required. Call now for appointment 542-5188. (16)

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penpals

Attractive 19 yr old male wishes correspondence while at school. Enjoys travel, sports & writing. GCN Box 837. (17+)

We get many requests from gays in prison to put pen pal ads in for them. Limited space prevents us from printing as many of these ads as we would like to, since the prisoners do not have the funds to pay for their ads. We will print more if anyone out there is willing to contribute. For each \$3 we receive we can print one more pen pal ad. Send checks to Penpals, GCN Box K92. (12)

Incarcerated Black, 28, novice writer seeks attractive young TV or GWM for friendship & correspondence. Geoffrey Toliver, #73 A 6268, Box 51, Constock, NY 12821. (18)

Since being incarcerated I have overcome drug addiction, enrolled in college and totally reconstructed my personal life. I am interested in sincere people who can care as feeling human beings, and I will answer every letter I receive. Edward (Ted) Floyd, 144-411, Box 45699, Lucasville, OH 45699. (18)

Seeking correspondence with anyone who might understand the meaning of friendship to a prisoner. Ward Woolfolk, 02842, cell 5-3-57, P.O. Box 747, Starke, FL 32091. (18)

BWM, 27, 5'9", 169, black hair & eyes. Interested in long lasting sincere friendship. Will answer all letters. Prefer men 35-50. Thomas Beavers, A-041491, 16-2115, P.O. Box 747, Starke, FL 32091. (18)

WM 20, 5'6", 130, brown hair, hazel eyes. No friends or family on outside. Need help and friends. Will answer all. Dale Collins 144-744, P.O. Box 511, Columbus, OH 43216. (18)

5'8", 140. Have no one to write to me. Please write Milton A. Dotson, 021404, C-44, P.O. Box 221, Rialford, FL 32083. (18)

BM, 25, serving 15 yrs. Out 78 or 79, looking for someone very fem to write. Also need new place to relocate. Thomas Sherman, 041243, P.O. Box 747, Apt. 21-3208, Starke, FL 32091. (18)

Don't look any further. Here I am. Yng WM, 6'11", 175, brown/brown. Lonely and to be released soon. Keith Jones, P.O. Box 1167, Gainesville, FL 32601. (18)

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Classified Ad deadline is Tuesday noon (prior to Sunday publication).

All ads must be paid in advance. No ads accepted by phone. Make check or money order payable to Gay Community News, 22 Bromfield St., Boston, Mass. 02108.

Since we serve all New England, please include your area code if your ad includes a phone number.

Non-business: \$3.00 per week for 4 lines (35 Characters per line); each additional line 25 cents. Headlines are 50 cents per week for 25 characters.

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Box Numbers are available at \$1.00 for 6 weeks if you pick up your mail. If, however, you wish your mail forwarded, the rate is \$3.00 for 6 weeks. Mail is forwarded at the end of the 3rd and 6th weeks. If you want mail forwarded for a 3 month period, a \$5.00 charge will be made for the additional time.

Please Circle one of the following ad categories:

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Gay prisoner, very lonely. 31, blond, blue eyes, \$11. Virgo. Seeks goodlooking guy, 27 who is lonely and really wants friend. Rick Banial 144-099, P.O. Box 45699, Lucaville, OH 45699. (15)

Attractive, intelligent M 28, 5'6", 140 lbs correspondence w/gay community. Gene Jones, 007813, P.O. Box 747, Starke, FL 32091. (19)

BM, 26, 6'11", 161, brown eyes, I brown complexion, interested in sports, collecting stamps, music, swimming, writing abstract poetry, some song writing, sex and reading, I haven't anyone to write of my choice, hope you will render me some help. Robert Henry Howell, III, 146-805, P.O. Box 511, Columbus, OH 43216. (19)

19, 160, 5'9", blond hair, hazel eyes. Interested in nature, animals, dirt bike riding, good friends. Out soon. James Owen, Forensic Unit, Box 1000, Chattahoochee, FL 32324. (19)

Two lonely prisoners. Please write Michael Angel, 146-805, and Wilson, R. Selick, 136-248, P.O. Box 45699, Lucaville, OH 45699. (19)

20, 5'8", 135, it brown hair, hazel eyes. Interested in other GM's, age doesn't matter. Must be sincere, honest, no SIM. Released soon. Hope to make some friends, want straight. John Morgan, P.O. Box 747, Starke, FL 32091, 0037266. (19)

organizations

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF WORCESTER, church service at 6 Institute Road, 2 p.m. Sundays. Rev. Jos. H. Gilbert, pastor. 756-0073. The 3rd year begins.

Metropolitan Community Church of Boston, services each Sunday at 7:00 p.m. (hymn sing 6:45), 131 Cambridge St., Boston (Old West Church), Edward T. Houghton, pastor. Office 523-7664. All persons are welcome.

SUPPORT LESBIAN MOTHERS Lesbian Mothers National Defense Fund, 2446 Lorentz Place, W. Seattle, WA 98109, (206) 282-5798. Membership \$5.00.

BOSTON GAY CATHOLICS Dignity Boston sponsors EXODUS MASS, a liturgy for gay and concerned Catholics every Sunday at Arlington Street Church (Boston), Boylston St. Entrance at 5:30 p.m. For info, contact Dignity/Boston, 355 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02114. Tel: 536-6518. (35)

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CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING Men, 40 and older, have problems different from young Gay Activists. Small discussion group forming NYC. Call (212) 242-8112 or write Burdick, Apt. 1C, 270 W. 25th St., NYC, NY 10001.

In New Jersey, the Gay Activist Alliance/Morris County meets every Monday at 8:30 p.m. using facilities of Unitarian Fellowship, Normandy Heights Rd., Morris-town, N.J. (201) 884-0653; 347-6234.

LUTHERANS ALC, LCA and MO. Uniting for justice, love, understanding in our church. Lutherans Concerned (for gay people), Box B-19114A, Los Angeles, CA 90019.

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Gaybreak Radio (WUOA-FM, 91.9) 545-2876
Gay Women's Caucus, Amherst 545-3438
Lesbian Union, 9th floor, Campus Center, UMass, Amherst 01003
Southwest Women's Center 545-0626
Springfield Gay Alliance 732-9315
Together, Box 427, Forest Park St., Springfield 01108
Valley Women's Center, Northampton 586-2011
Williams Gay Support Organization, S.U. Box 3212, Williams College, Williamstown 01267

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Everywoman's Center, Box 949, 14 Center St., Provincetown 02857 (44-6) Otis Warren Lesbian Support Group, Mersey Otis Warren Women's Center, 27 Winter St., Hyannis 02601 617-6739
Martha's Vineyard Gay Group 627-5370
MCC Worcester 756-0730
New Bedford Women's Clinic 999-1570
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Survival Crisis Line 471-7100

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George W. Henry Foundation, Norwich 522-2646
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LESBIAN CONNECTION A free nationwide forum of news and ideas by, for and about lesbians (donations are always welcome). For a subscription simply send your name, address and zip to: Ambitious Amazons, Box 811, East Lansing, MI 48823.

"The Wishing Well," a national publication with emphasis on helping gay/lesbianists reach others with similar life styles. Code n's used to insure confidentiality. P.O. Box 1711, Santa Rosa, CA 95403.

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BAMBOO LOUNGE 30 Avery St. Food, Mixed. Boston, MA.

BOSTON EAGLE 88 Quincy Street 247-9586
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NAPOLEON CLUB 52 Piedmont St. 338-7547
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PLAYLAND 21 Essex St. Men (Some Women).

119 MERRIMAC 119 Merrimac St. 523-8960
Dancing, Men, Tues.-Thurs. Buffet 9-11PM

RAINBOW ROOM 15 Lansdowne St. Disco Dancing, Men.

SAINTS (Call 354-8807) Women.

SOMEWHERE 295 Franklin St. 423-7730
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SPORTER'S CAFE 228 Cambridge St. Food, Men, Saturday Brunch 5PM, Movies Mon., 3PM, Sunday Brunch 3PM.

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TOGETHER 110 Boylston St. Disco Dancing, Mixed.

1270 1270 Boylston St. 261-1257
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TWELVE CARVER 12 Carver St. Men.

Quick Gay Guide

BOSTON AREA (Area Code 617)
Access (Cambridge Hotline) 661-3900
Am Tikva 524-1890, 628-3986
Cambridge Gay Political Caucus, P.O. Box 218, E. Cambridge 02141
Cambridge Women's Center 523-1081
Charles Street Men's House 523-1081
Civil Liberties Union of Mass. Daughters of Bilitis, 1151 Mass. Ave., Cambridge 02138
Dignity/Boston, 355 Boylston St. (Arlington St. Church) 536-6518
Elder Noble (Rt.) 227-2584
Evangelicals Concerned 894-3970
Gay Rag 536-9826
Fenway Community Health Center 267-7573
Fengay, c/o Tom Nyland 267-1066
Framingham Unicorn Society, P.O. Box 163, Framingham 01701
Gay Academic Union of New England, P.O. Box 212, Boston 02101
Gay Alliance, Greater Boston 471-6884
Gay Business Ass'n (Job Bank), 102 Charles St., Boston MA 02114
Suite 129
Gay Community News 426-4469
Gay Education Service (Human Achievement Foundation), P.O. Box 398, Allston 02134
Gay Hotline 13-12pm, Mon.-Fri.) Gay Legislation, P.O. Box 841, JFK Station, Boston 02114
73 Tremont St., Rm 224
Gay Men's Center, Box 614, Boston 02215
Gay Nurses' Alliance-East, P.O. Box 530, Back Bay Annex Boston 02117
Gay People of UMass/Boston 267-1900 (X2396)
Gay Professional Women's Assn., Box 308, Boston U. Sta., Boston 02215
Gay Recreational Activities Committee (GRAC), c/o GCN Box 8000
Gay Speakers Bureau, P.O. Box 2232, Boston 02107
Gay Way Radio (WBUR, 90.9FM) 257-2790
Gay Youth Advocates, 70 Charles St. Gender Identity Service 864-8181
Good Gay Poets 536-9826
Harvard-Radcliffe Gay Student Assn. 498-2014
Homophile Community Health Service 542-5188
Integrity, P.O. Box 2582, Boston 02208
Janus Counseling for Lesbians, 21 Bay St., Cambridge 661-2537
Lesbian Liberation, c/o Women's Center 354-8807
Lesbians Concerned for Gay People Massachusetts Feminist Federal Credit Union, 186 1/2 Hampshire St., Cambridge 661-0450
Metropolitan Community Church MIT Homophile League, rm 50-254 523-5464
National Lawyers Guild, 595 Mass. Ave., Cambridge 661-8898, 661-6358

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Lesbian Union, 9th floor, Campus Center, UMass, Amherst 01003
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Martha's Vineyard Gay Group 627-5370
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Survival Crisis Line 471-7100

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George W. Henry Foundation, Norwich 522-2646
East Conn. Gay Alliance, Norwich 522-2646
Gay Alliance at Yale, Box 2031, Yale Station, New Haven 06520 436-8945
Gay phone counseling (eves), New Haven 436-8945
Gay Switchboard 522-5575

Gay Women's Collective/ Women's Center, U-118, University of Ct. Storrs 06268 486-4738
Hartford Gay Counseling 522-5575, 232-5110
Institute of Social Ethics/National Gay Archives, 1 Gold St., Suite 22B, Hartford 06103 547-1281
Kalos/Gay Liberation, Hartford 568-2656
MCC/Hartford 232-5110, 522-5575
New Haven Lesbian Bar, 148 Orange St., New Haven 436-0272
The Church of the Eternal Flame Universal 527-2656
UConn Gay Alliance, University of Ct. Box U-5, Storrs 06268 (Office: Rm. 211 Student Union (104 M.F.) 486-2273
Yale/lesbians, Box 2031, Yale Station, New Haven 06520 436-8945

RHODE ISLAND (Area Code 401) Brown University Gay Lib, 305 Faunce Gay House, rm 510, Providence 863-3062
Dignity/Providence, Box 2231, Pawtucket 863-3111
Gay Help Line 715-3322
Gay Community Services of R.I., 55 Eddy St., Rm 306
Gay Women of Brown, c/o Sarah Doyle Women's Center, 186 Meeting St., Providence 863-2189
Integrity, Box 71, Annex Sta., Providence 02801
MCC/Providence, 134 Mathewson St. 751-6023
MCC Innovative Ministry (terminally ill, aged and handicapped), Rev. Michael Nordstrum 272-8482
Providence Gay Group of AA 231-5853

MAINE (Area Code 207) CMGA, Box 2242, Augusta 04330 869-7330
Confidential Drug and Alcohol Rap Group, Box 4542, Portland 04112
Gay People's Alliance, 92 Bedford St. Gay Union of Maine, Portland 04103 ext. 535
Growing, Sober and Gay, Box 893, Waterville 04901
Maine Freewoman's Herald, 193 Middle St., 3rd floor, Portland 04111 774-6071
Maine Gay Task Force, Box 4542, Portland 04112
Maine Lesbian Feminists, Box 125, Belfast 04915
Mainly Gay, Box 4542, Portland 04112 773-5530
The Wilde-Stein Club, Memorial Union, University of Maine, Orono 04473

NEW HAMPSHIRE (Area Code 603) MCC-Extension, 292 State St., Portsmouth 03801 382-4678
Nashua Area Gays 673-5315
NH Lambda, Box 1043, Concord 03301 228-8542
Northwood Women's Group, G. Ball, Box 273, RFD 1, Manchester 03104
NOW Lesbian Rights Task Force, 4 Valentine Hill Rd., Durham 02834

VERMONT (Area Code 802) Counseling/Support for Gay Women, c/o Susan Katt, South VT Women's Health Center, 187 N. Main St., Rutland, VT 05701 775-1518
Gay Student Union, Univ. of VT, Burlington 05401, M.F. 7.9 pm 656-4713
Women's Center, 182 Main St., Burlington 863-1236

NEW YORK (STATE) Affirmation (Unitarian Universalist Gay Caucus), 34 Chestnut St., Delmar 12054
Capital District Gay Community Center (7-11pm), 332 Hudson Ave., Albany 12210 (518) 462-6138
Capital District Gay Political Caucus, Box 131, Albany 12201 (518) 462-6138
Dignity/Integrity/Rochester 42 Tyler House, 17 So. Fitzhugh St., Rochester 14614 (716) 232-6521
Empty Closet Collection, 1255 University Ave., Rochester 14607 (716) 271-6750
Gay Alliance of The Genesee Valley, Inc., 713 Monroe Ave., Rochester (716) 244-8640 ext. 244-9030
Gay Brotherhood of Rochester, 713 Monroe Ave., Rochester (716) 244-8640
Gay Liberation Front, U. of R. Wilson Commons, Rochester 14607 (716) 275-6181
Gay Task Force, 713 Monroe Ave., Rochester (Mon. 7pm) (716) 244-8640 ext. 244-9030
Hamilton-Kirkland Gay Alliance, Box 80, Hamilton College, Clinton 13323
Lambda Union, Box 131, Albany 12201 (518) 462-6138
Lesbian Resource Center, 713 Monroe Ave., Rochester 14607 (716) 244-9030
NY State Coalition of Gay Organizations, Box 131, Albany 12201 (518) 462-6138
Stonewall Society, Poughkeepsie (914) 473-3857

NEW YORK (CITY) (Area Code 212) Ass'n of Gay Social Workers, c/o Ron Ginsberg, 345 W. 21st St., apt. 1-A Church of the Beloved Disciple, 348 W. 14th St., 10004 242-6616
Gay People at Columbia, Columbia U., 10027 280-2574
Gay Switchboard, Box 805, Madison St., St. 10010 717-1800
The Glines, 260 W. Broadway 925-2619
Lambda Legal Defense, P.O. Box 5448, Grand Central Sta., 10017 758-1905
Lesbian Switchboard 741-2610
MCC/NY, 201 W. 13th St., 10011 242-1212
National Coalition of Gay Activists, P.O. Box A-711, Grand Central Sta., 10017
National Gay Task Force, 80 Fifth Ave., rm 506 741-1010
Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop, 15 Christopher St., New York 255-8097
Tri-base Collective 533-4492
West Side Discussion Group, 37 Ninth Ave. 675-0143

calendar

rememberrememberrememberremember

31 mon

Boston — Halloween open house, before primping for the parties: Vegetarian, collectively-run restaurant, "The Hedge School." Come for natural treats. 5:30-8pm, 211 Bay State Rd. (near B.U.).

November

1 tues

NYC — Twenty Years of Gay History: The Gay Movement Before Stonewall. 3 lectures. Tonight 8 p.m.: The Origins. John D'Emilio, speaker. School for Marxist Education, 186 W. 4th St. (enter Barrow St.). (212) 989-6493. \$2.

2 wed

Provincetown, MA — Forum sponsored by Human Rights Coalition of Provincetown. Tonight at 6 pm, Town Hall Auditorium. Topic will be gay issues. Info: 487-9032.

Deadline for all Calendar Items, Every-week and Quick Gay Guide is 12 noon each Wednesday for the next issue.

3 thur

Waltham, MA — Brandeis Gay Alliance hosts Joe Martin from Gay Legislation. 8 pm, International Lounge, Usdan Student Center, Brandeis University.

4 fri

New Haven, CT — Liliith Enterprises presents the Berkeley Women's Collective in concert at the Educational Center for the Arts, 55 Audobon Street, 8 pm. Tickets \$3 in advance, \$3.50 at door. Childcare provided.

Amherst, MA — People's Gay Alliance of UMass will sponsor a coffeehouse at 8 pm to 1 am in Hampden D.C. theatre. Live entertainment. Admission \$1.00.

5 sat

Providence, RI — "What do gay rights mean to you?" A rally for gay rights and the Providence Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination Ordinance will be held at the First Unitarian Church, Benefit & Benevolent Streets, from 3:30 to 5 pm. Elaine Noble is keynote speaker. Rally will be followed by a reception at Fife & Drum, Weybosset & Dorrance Sts. Info: Gay Help Line 8-12 pm (401) 751-3322.

Cambridge — Gay Folkdancing for women and men, 3-6pm in Peabody Room, 3rd floor Phillips Brooks House (north end of Harvard Yard).

6 sun

Boston — Human Achievement Gay Education Service "Exploratory Meetings" for a Boston Gay Community Center. 3-5 pm at 96 Beacon St. Info: Al Bouchard 277-2484.

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738 - 5-100

Homosexuals express faith, love at MCC

By RICHARD C. DUJARDIN
Journal-Bulletin Religion Writer

PROVIDENCE — Each Sunday evening, the members of the Metropolitan Community Church gather at the Mathewson Street United Methodist Church for worship.

The atmosphere is calm and reverent, as strains of "How Great Thou Art" fill the air. Downstairs, a dozen or so children gather at the same time for their weekly Sunday school lesson.

Outwardly the church is like many. Besides the Sunday school, the church runs flea markets and potluck suppers, conducts Bible study courses and holds worship services in which members pray for one another, read Biblical passages, and partake of Communion bread and wine.

Its minister, the Rev. Marge Ragona, — talks of the importance of a religious conversion experience to Jesus Christ. A daughter of a Methodist minister, she is a former fifth-grade teacher and a former religious education director of a Southern Baptist church in Louisiana.

Ragona says she is "born again."

• • •

SHE IS also a lesbian, a mother of three, and the pastor of Providence's only avowedly "homosexual" church, a congregation numbering 40 or so regular members, 15 or so "hangers on" and some 25 to 30 children of "gay" parents.

For the last couple of years, MCC had been holding its services at the Mathewson Street Methodist Church each Sunday at 7 p.m. The group used to hold services in a private apartment, but gave that up because rocks were thrown through the window during services.

Members of the church range in age from the early 20s to the 70s, and are individuals and "couples" of all kinds. The church's longest-standing



RAGONA

comes when you are not doing God's will."

And like the fig tree bearing good fruit, she said, "we too will flourish if we are open and loving and giving toward one another. It matters not how others may judge us. We have but one Judge. And by our fruits the Lord will know us."

• • •

LATER in the service, the children in the Sunday school arrive to join their parents for the Communion.

Breaking bread on the altar table, Pastor Ragona recites Christ's words of the Last Supper, blessing the bread and the wine. And on signal the participants come up to the Communion rail. They walk up as couples hand-in-hand, as individuals, or as mother-and-child, or as mother-lover-and-child, depending on the circumstance.

Dipping the bread into the wine, the minister places the Communion on the tongue of the kneeling communicants. Then in a minute-long embrace, she huddles with the individual and/or couple, reciting a prayer asking God's help in overcoming the struggles and problems of the moment.

• • •

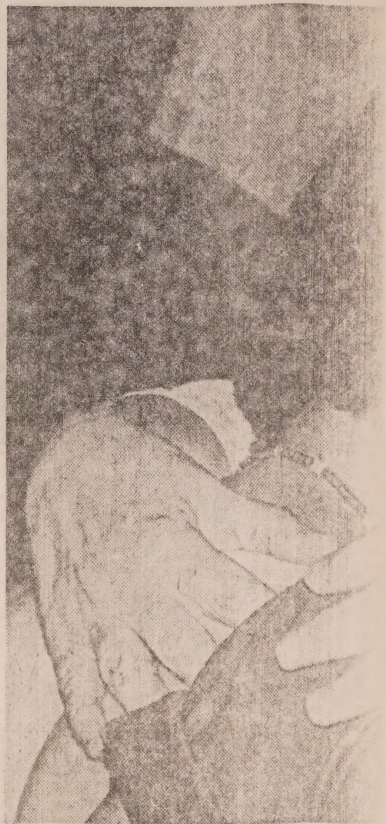
MEMBERS of the congregation give varied reasons for coming to Metropolitan Community Church.

A 39-year-old college professor said that at first he was afraid to be seen walking into a "gay" church, even though he did not fear being seen in gay bars.

"But the vibrations and love I found here were so strong that I knew I just had to stay," he said. "I received so much faith in myself and in my God here that nothing else seems to matter."

A lesbian mother of six and a lesbian mother of two, both divorced, said the church Sunday school afforded them an opportunity to worship again "as a family."

The parents said they did not think attendance at a predominantly homosexual church would cause their children to be



Sunday service

The Rev. Marge Ragona, above center, "huddles" in prayer with two people after they received Communion at the Metropolitan Community Church, Providence's only church for homosexuals. At right, the congregation joins hands during a prayer. Story on this page.

—Journal-Bulletin Photos
by LAWRENCE S. MILLARD

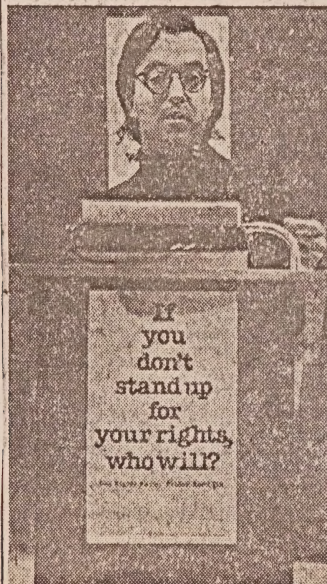
of Gay Political Caucus to sue Providence councilmen

By MARK PATINKIN
Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer

PROVIDENCE — The Rhode Island Gay Political Caucus yesterday said it will file suit against members of a City Council committee for allegedly violating the constitutional rights of those who supported a Providence anti-discrimination ordinance.

The ordinance, whose most controversial provision related to discrimination against homosexuals, was defeated by the City Council 28 to 6 Thursday night.

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—Journal-Bulletin Photos
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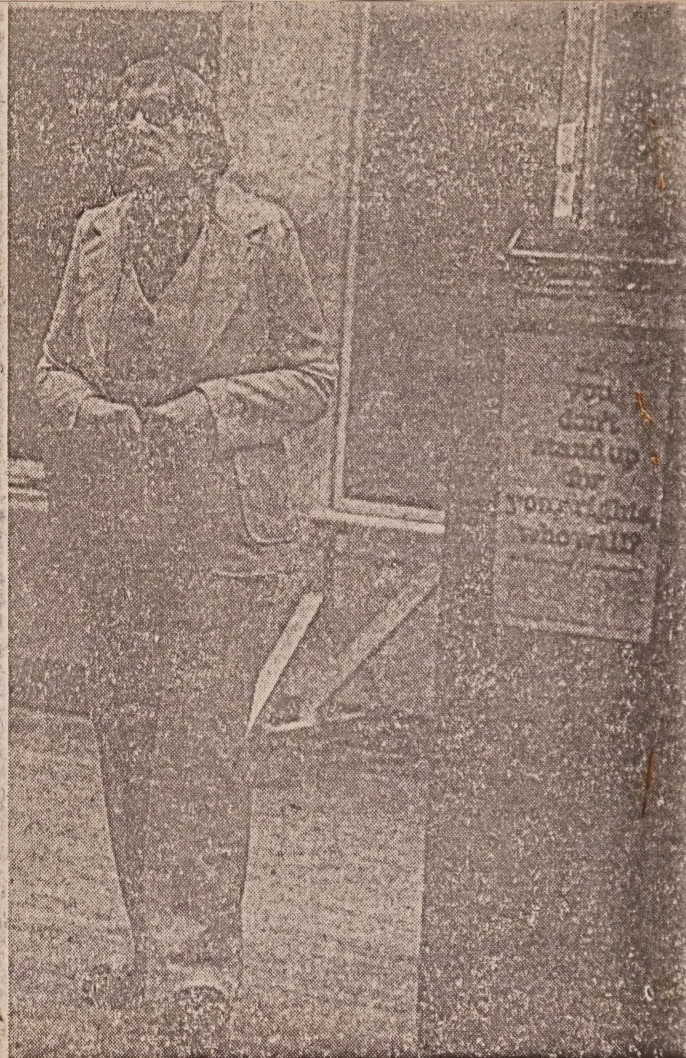
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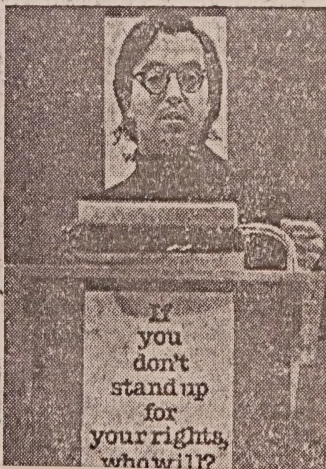
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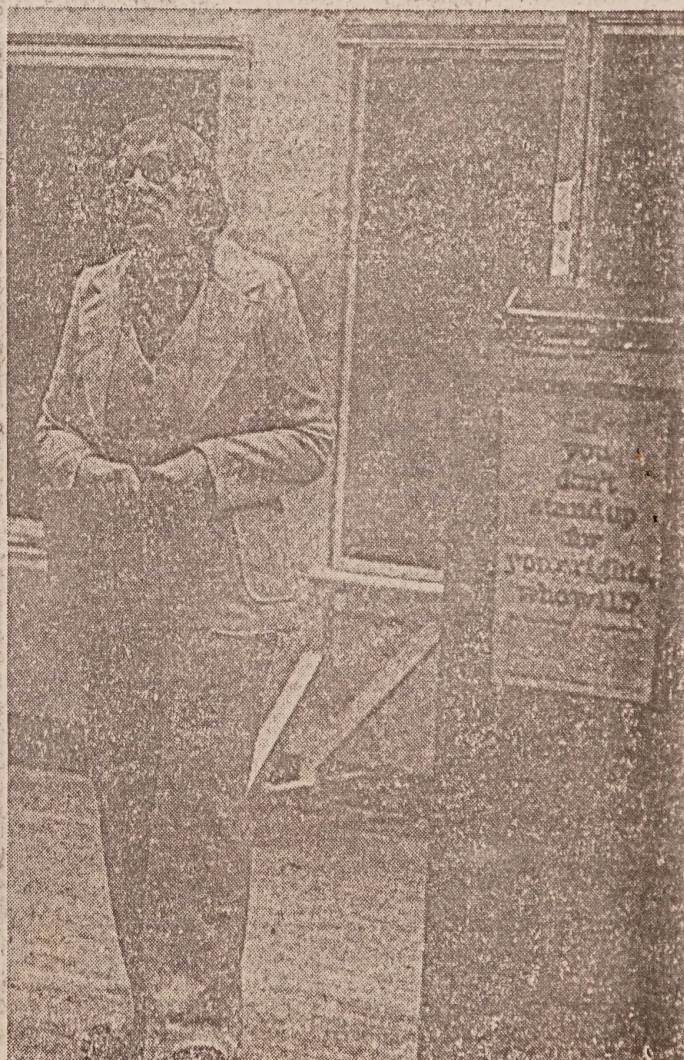
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Pastor of church responds to reverend's letter

Dear Editor:

In response to Rev. G.M. Ottsen's letter of May 22, 1980, let me attempt to correct an impression he tried to convey.

The United States is a pluralistic society. If a group — any group — wishes to worship God, no matter how strange they may seem to Mr. Ottsen, the Constitution protects that right. A group of gay people do, indeed, have a church in Ventura County. Metropolitan Community Church is a Christian church whose doors are open to all people of faith, who, because of people like Mr. Ottsen, feel or have been excluded from many Christian churches, Protestant, Catholic, Mormon, and others. Many of our congregation are gay, others are not. We ask only that they "love mercy, do justice, and walk humbly with their God." We have been present in

Ventura County for five years. We are not new. We are unique.

Secondly, no responsible Christian could point to any definite evidence in Scripture for Jesus' sexuality. It is just not mentioned. (Of course, by the way, neither does Jesus mention homosexuality, for or against.) As pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church, no literature of ours which I have sent out carries any suggestion that "Jesus was gay." However, recently we have seen materials produced by some Fundamentalist Christians in conjunction with conservative political groups which misrepresents our purpose, our beliefs, and our methods.

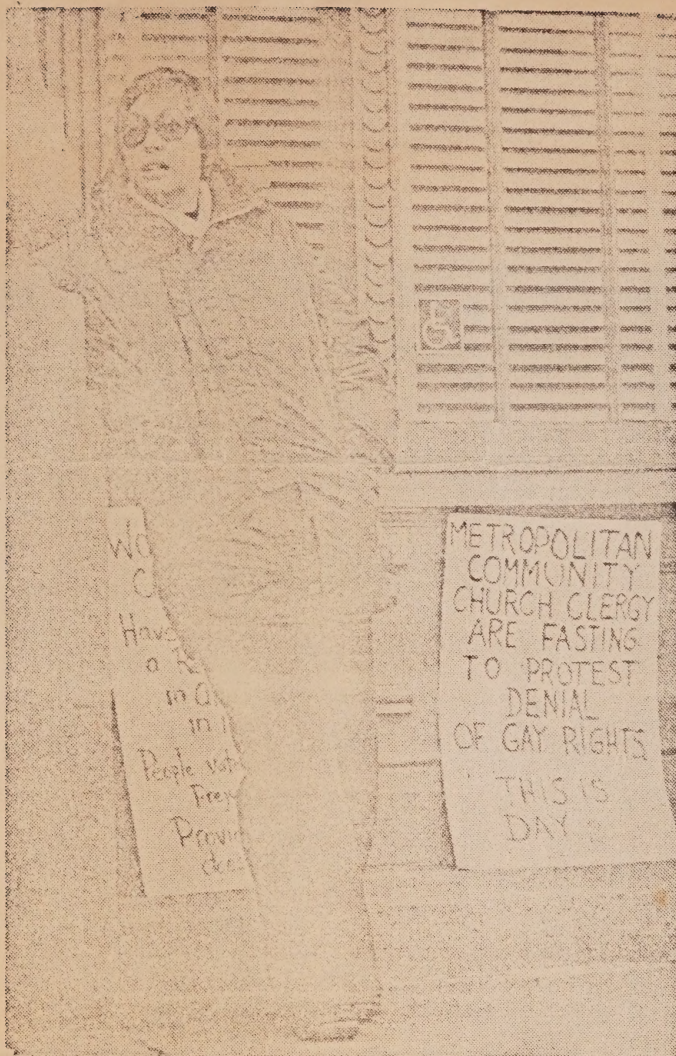
Our By-Laws specifically state that "Founded in the interest of offering a church home to all who confess and believe

(in Jesus Christ) the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches moves in the mainstream of Christianity. Our faith is based upon the principles outlined in the historic creeds, Apostles and Nicene."

I can see some theological differences with Mr. Ottsen, since we are a creedal Eucharistic church, but I can see no difference in our understanding of the nature of the Savior whom we both worship. I trust this corrects the record. We invite all people of goodwill, especially gay folk who are uncomfortable with the Mr. Ottsen's of their churches, to come and worship the living Christ in a joyful and loving manner."

Sincerely,

Marjorie F. Ragona, Pastor
Ventura



—Journal-Bulletin Photo by ANDY DICKERMAN

HUNGER STRIKE: Rev. Marge Ragona during the second day of her fast on the steps of the Federal Building in Providence.

Pastor protests vote on 'gay' rights

PROVIDENCE — The pastor of Providence's Metropolitan Community Church, which has a congregation of about 35 homosexuals, today was in the second day of a seven-day fast and vigil which she is conducting on the steps of the federal court house here.

The Rev. Marge Ragona, 49, said her demonstration is part of a protest being

mounted by about 150 homosexual clergymen around the country in cities which have turned down ordinances on homosexual civil rights.

Mrs. Ragona was joined at various times yesterday by church sexton Paul Paoletti and about half a dozen other men and women.

Paoletti said church members plan to keep vigil along with their pastor for each

of the seven nights. Special prayer services also will be held throughout the week.

Mrs. Ragona said she is not afraid of spending nights in downtown Providence while crusading for an unpopular cause.

"I have great faith in Providence's apathy and its lack of involvement in this sort of issue," she said.



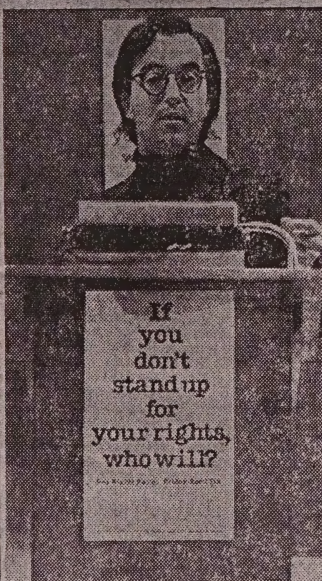
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THE WATERFRONT at Fox Point as sails began yielding to steam power.

ANNIVERSARY

continued
making that town preeminent in the state, now were catching the southern winds to carry them and their cargoes up Narragansett Bay to Providence. Newport might not like it, but Providence was going to be the first town in Rhode Island.

Along India Point, where the Providence River merges with the bay, lay the ships of the East India trade and those that carried on the commerce with China. The ships that traded with the West Indies, of lesser burthen than the others, lay to wharves along the river, while coastwise vessels, the smallest of all, were well up the river,

many of them above the bridge with its creaking draw.

The town still depended heavily on the vessels that passed up and down the bay for its communications with other communities, but other means of getting about were improving. Mails went out to the West and South twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays, coming in from those directions on Wednesdays and Fridays. To the East, the mail was dispatched on Tuesdays and Fridays and was received here on Mondays and Thursdays.

Much of the life of the town still was concentrated on the east side of the river, but already the enterprising merchants had their eyes on the flat land — marshy it might be, but suit-

able for development — on the west side of the Great Bridge. There, Westminster and Weybosset Streets had begun their thrust to the westward.

Then on January 21, 1801, came a great fire, the most destructive since rampaging Indians had nearly burned the town down on March 29, 1676, during King Philip's War. It destroyed 37 buildings, but the townspeople turned it to advantage by developing the devastated areas more along the lines of what, for them, was a modern municipality.

Two years later, Daniel Anthony, the surveyor, made the first survey map of the town. Already the Town Street of the founders was called Main Street — and a half-dozen other

names as the fancy struck those with property along its length. Near the market house it had been paved with cobblestones, although elsewhere the ladies of the town, delicately raising the hems of their skirts above the mire, crossed it on stepping stones. When the streets were named formally in 1805, Main Street became that from end to end, except that almost everybody still referred to that section between the market building and Steeple Street — a couple of blocks solid with stores — as Cheapside.

(It would be 1824 before the houses along the streets would carry numbers. Edward R. Young, the grocer, who lived at 63 Fountain Street, where the Journal Building is now

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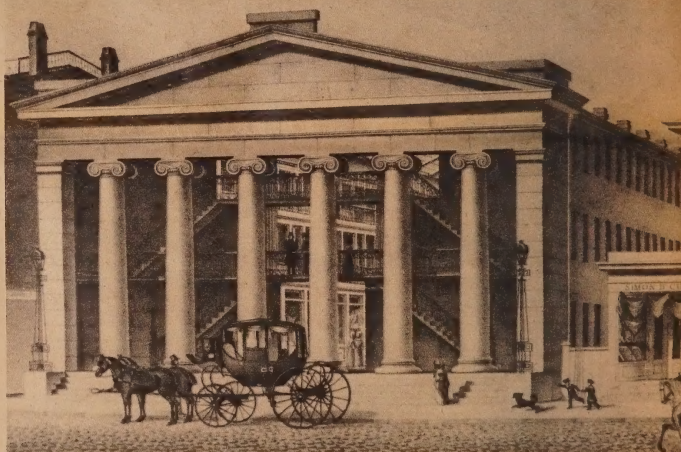
continued
standing, had insisted on numbers — so insisted that he was given the job, at no pay, of supervising the work of numbering.)

And then the clouds of war darkened the prospects of the town. It was the British again. All the old memories came welling back. The Revolution was not so remote in time that the older men and women had forgotten. That had been a time when the British had blockaded Newport and Narragansett Bay. Men still lived who, with muffled oars, had rowed out from Providence one night to attack and burn His Majesty's armed schooner *Gaspee*, hard aground on a shallow off the Warwick shore. There — not at Concord or Lexington — was spilled

the first blood of the Revolution. Seamen still remembered a young spitfire of a captain, his sharp hazel eyes capable of measuring a topmast hand at a glance, who tramped the streets along the Providence waterfront, impatient while his ship, the *Alfred*, was fitting out. His name was John Paul Jones.

Everyone above middle age remembered the hard times of the war years, the dislocations of families, the short rations, the desperate fears that the sound of a horse's racing hooves set abroad in the night. Was it to be the same all over again?

The news of the the war declaration reached Providence on June 24, 1812. All day, the church bells tolled. Shops were closed and in the streets few persons passed to and fro. The flags on all the ships in the harbor and that on the pole at the end of the Great Bridge were lowered to half mast.



THE ARCADE, seen from the Westminster Street side.



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Two days later, the *Rhode Island American* said: "Every thing wore the aspect of mourning, expressing the feelings of our citizens upon the great national calamity which has befallen us." War, the town knew, would put an end to its economic development, or at least interpose a pause.

But its country was at war. That was the overriding consideration. Providence might not like what it knew the war would do to it, but its people were as loyal as any in this new republic. Having declared themselves vigorously opposed to the war, they as vigorously answered the needs of the

country Rhode Island had so recently, and with so much reluctance, consented to join.

As the months wore on, Rhode Island ships rocked at their moorings, their crews set ashore to seek out jobs where they could find them or, on rare occasions, to sign on with a privateer fitting out to try its speed and courage with what it could discover on the broad reaches of ocean beyond the bay.

The minds of the people were diverted from the war momentarily in the spring of 1814 by a spectacular fire that lighted up the hillside above

Back Street, as the present Benefit Street then was known. There, at the corner of Benevolent Street, was the new building of the First Congregational Church, a fine wood structure with a row of pillars across the front. It stood out from other Providence churches in that it was painted, not white, but yellow.

In the darkness of the early hours of June 18, a man named Gifford bored a hole in one of the wood pillars and in it set a lighted candle. That was enough. The entire building went up in flames. Everyone supposed at the start that the fire had been set. The

editor of the *Rhode Island American* believed the man's intention had been to burn down the entire town, and had it not been for "a continual shower of rain it is supposed that his diabolical wishes might have been gratified."

As it was, it was bad enough. The church building was gone and the pastor, the Rev. Henry Edes, had been injured by a falling piece of timber but fortunately, observed the *American*, the injuries were not serious. The church soon was rebuilt, this time in stone. Contributions from an incensed community made possible its construction without recourse to the lot-

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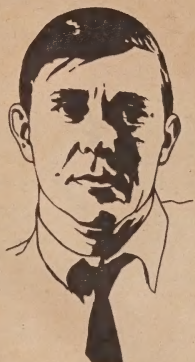
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**The
Providence
Journal.**

ANNIVERSARY

continued

tery usual to the times.

At last the war was over. Providence heard of the end of it on February 12, 1815. Immediately, everybody lighted up their houses and places of business. Despite the bitter cold, half the population, or more, thronged into the streets, and remained there, expressing their pleasure and rejoicing until such a late hour that, were it any other occasion, the town watch would have had its hands full taking names and admonishing the merrymakers. (The euphoria ended quickly for some who had overextended themselves in business and were caught in the collapse of prices that followed the war's end.)

Now the town could turn again to its usual avenues of commerce and rebuild that which it had lost.

The *Gazette* said: "The noise of the axe and the hammer begins again to be heard in our workshops and on our wharves, and the busy note of preparation presages the return of those halcyon days with which we have been too long and unnecessarily estranged." Just a way of saying that the town's ships were being got ready again to put to sea.

Everything was bustling — until two hours on September 23 nearly

wiped the town out.

It started like the usual line storm, did this Great Gale of 1815. But it was a hurricane, spawned somewhere to the southward over tropical seas. The tides of the bay, thrust implacably by the swirling winds, crashed into the center of the town, rising 12 feet above the level of any spring tide.

The great ship *Ganges*, an East Indiaman of 520 tons burthen, parted her moorings and went careening up the river, smashing through the bridge and, turning broadside, sweeping the second floor of the Washington Insurance Building into wreckage with her bowsprit. She fetched up, hard aground, in the cove where the Providence and Moshassuck Rivers merged, there to remain until the wreckers tore her apart.

Other ships and vessels of all kinds followed her wild course. Some were salvaged later, some were not. On the wharves, thousands of dollars in merchandise from a hundred ports around the world were swept away. Said the *Rhode Island American* as soon as it could get its type set: "The elegant fence which encloses the First Baptist Meeting House was injured in several places by the fall of surrounding poplars, but, to the astonishment of every one, the magnificent spire of the superb edifice still towers sublime." It added that "chimnies, trees, fences &c. were prostrated in every direction."



THE SOUTHERN part of Benefit Street, as drawn by Peckham in 1834.

Only two citizens died despite the magnitude of the storm: David Butler and Reuben Winslow drowned at India Point where the great ships lay.

Overall, the damage was estimated at a million and a half dollars, a truly colossal sum in those days. Yet, again, the town was to see an advantage in its distress. It established new harbor lines. When the Great Bridge was rebuilt, it had no draw — henceforward all shipping was to be kept below it. And perhaps most noticeable of all to the people who trod the streets, no longer were shop signs to extend out from the buildings; now they had to be affixed flat against the storefronts.

Less than two years later a momentous event occurred. On May 28, 1817, a Wednesday, there arrived in Providence the steamboat *Fire-Fly*. On Friday, it traveled to Newport and returned in 11 hours. It was still in the bay when President James Monroe visited the state in June and he entrusted himself to the *Fire-Fly* for the few miles from Bristol to Providence. (He had with him the revenue cutter *Vigilant* and the Navy's schooner *Lynx*, just in case they might be needed.)

There was a great firing of cannon to greet the President, and an almost constant ringing of bells as he passed through the streets to the quarters prepared for him. The next morning,

President Monroe mounted a horse and "took a view of the town," accompanied by many of the most distinguished citizens, similarly mounted.

(You didn't have to be very old to

remember that when President George Washington had come to town in 1790, accompanied by his secretary of state, a man named Thomas Jefferson, the President and his party had

walked through the streets.)

The presence of the *Fire-Fly* in Providence waters was good testimony that steam-propelled vessels could venture out of the sheltered shipping

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ANNIVERSARY

continued

lanes, for hadn't she braved the passage from New York, as bold as any of those vessels that spread their sails to the winds? Steam power for vessels afloat was not exactly unknown in Providence. Twenty-five years before, Elijah Ormsbee of the town had constructed a steam-driven vessel that he called *Experiment*. It had run up and down the Seekonk River, between Providence and Taunton, but nobody had paid much notice to it. Not until Robert Fulton's experiment on the Hudson River was the public's attention focused on the possibilities of steamboats.

The *Fire-Fly* was something of a wonder, and among those who examined her most closely were the mill men of Providence and their chief mechanics. Steam could drive a vessel on the water; then steam could drive the machinery of a mill. David Wilkinson, that premier mechanic of his time, perfected in 1817 a power loom driven

by steam that took the weaving of cloth out of the homes and put it into factories, where the spinning of thread already was being done, and these factories could be situated at locations remote from the power of running water and the spillways of dams.

The *Fire-Fly* had hardly left Rhode Island when another arrival attracted almost as much attention: The first elephant ever seen by the townspeople was brought in. The first whale to be displayed in the town didn't arrive until February 27, 1829. The elephant had been live; the whale was stuffed.

With the year 1820, came another census. It showed that the town had grown in population to 11,767 (or by another record, 11,745) with an enormous 5,118 of them living now across the Great Bridge on the west side of the river. The town voted to provide lights for the streets, but not without debate. Perhaps some persons thought lighted streets would entice townspeople from their homes in the dark

hours when they should have been seeking sleep to prepare themselves for the next day's duties in store or factory.

Well, the watch could take care of those who did venture forth. The watch still patrolled the streets in pairs, tall and muscular men swathed in long capes, carrying as their badge of office six-foot staves with iron hooks on the ends. They were empowered to stop any man who was abroad between 11 p.m. and the sunrise bell and inquire his name. (Only men? Certainly. No woman would be out in those hours.)

In the early fall of that year, someone counted 126 wagons laden with produce drawn up in Market Square where in years before half a hundred would have been considered a lot.

That year of 1820 also brought to the town, on January 3, a new newspaper, the *Manufacturers' and Farmers' Journal and Providence and Pawtucket Advertiser*, from which the *Daily Journal* was to evolve nine years later.

The next year, the town decided to improve itself by the construction of sidewalks and gutters along its principal streets. And if the promise of the *Fire-Fly* had been lost on anybody, there arrived on August 22, 1821, the steamboat *Robert Fulton*, direct from New York.

Communications were improving everywhere. Now it was possible to take a stage in Providence at 5 a.m. and reach Boston in time to conduct business for two hours before boarding a stage that would put you back in Providence at 7 p.m. The same day! By so much had the roads been improved.

Soon a steamboat named *Providence* was running regularly between Providence and Newport. It could make the run north, against wind and tide, in three hours.

The town still worried about fires. On July 4, 1823, it put into effect an ordinance prohibiting the smoking of cigars on the streets. And the fire marshals were dead serious about en-



THE COFFEE HOUSE in Market Square, where the first issue of the *Daily Journal* was printed.

forcing it. Despite their vigilance, another great fire swept the town in May, 1825, this time on the west side of the river. Again, the town took the opportunity to improve itself.

In 1822, the *Journal* had observed: "A number of shops in Westminster Street have lately been fitted up in superb style, for the retail dry goods' business. The pleasant promenade on the North side of this street will probably be more frequented than ever, by our belles and beaux, in consequence of this new arrangement. Whether this promenade shall be named Cornhill, New Cheapside, or Westminster Row, is a question on which much difference of opinion seems to exist." The *Journal* suggested the naming be left to the women of the town. In the event, the name for this west side thoroughfare remained Westminster Street.

In 1827 there arose, between Westminster Street and the parallel Weybosset Street, a new building that was the marvel of its age. The Arcade grew to three stories, an enclosed collection of small shops housed in a great classic building of stone that remains today, although now dwarfed by the tall structures around it. The Arcade's two architects being unable to agree on the features of the entablature, the building displays two differing designs, one on each end, but both with the massive columns drawn from the quarries in Johnston by long lines of oxen.

It was about this time that a contretemps occurred farther up Weybosset Street. Up there, near the hills where were still visible the earthworks of the forts reared to defend the town at the time of the latest war with Great Britain, near Brown Bread Hill and Ropewalk Hill — where a Mr. Butts fired off a cannon on every St. Catherine's Day, April 30, for some reason best known to him — there had been built the imposing structure of the Beneficent Congregational Church, called Round Top because of its great domed roof. Past the church ran the main road to the settlements along the bay to the southward, principally Pawtuxet, a road lined with stately poplar trees.

On the Sabbath, the traffic passing along the road was of considerable annoyance to the congregation of Round Top Church. Taking the situation into their own hands, the church people drove large staples into a couple of the Lombardy poplars and, during the hours of services, hung a restraining chain across the highway. This prac-

tice persisted until one day a man dismounted from his carriage, begged a hatchet from one of the houses beside the road, and cut the chain down.

That created talk in the town, you may be sure. But even more discussion

was generated in the summer of 1829, when two competing publishers rushed to gain the distinction (and competitive advantage) of being first to bring out a daily newspaper in Rhode Island. On July 20, the *Provi-*

dence Daily Advertiser appeared. The next morning, the *Providence Daily Journal* published its first issue. The *Advertiser* died in four years. The *Journal* remains after one hundred and fifty.



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By Joan Faulkner

Putting cuisine in a cruise

WARM-WEATHER entertaining has it all over cold-weather entertaining — especially here in southern New England, the land of lush back yards and sunny beaches. For one thing, you can do it *al fresco*, which means more time and fun with guests and less mess to clean up afterwards.

And one of the nicest ways to entertain outdoors is on a boat. Of course, not everyone owns a boat, but around here just about everyone knows someone who does.

If you're the guest, wear clothes that are easy to climb about in and warm enough (a sweater and windproof jacket are musts, no matter how warm it may be on shore) and shoes that have soft, non-skid soles. (Boat owners have been known to froth at the mouth at the sound of high heels clacking down the ramp.) Take a seasick pill before



boarding if you tend toward *mal de mer* — and keep out of the captain's and crew's way if you don't know your bowsprit from your boomkin.

The boat-owning host and hostess have more responsibilities, of course, but with a small amount of planning these needn't be overwhelming. In fact, you may end up having more fun than your guests; after all, you're not only dispensing largess, but showing off your boating skills and precious boat as well.

Here are a few things to keep in mind for successful boat entertaining:

Bring along extra clothing in case your guests forget to. Also, such aquatic necessities as dark glasses, suntan lotion and towels (in case you decide to go swimming or someone falls overboard).

Be sure you have a supply of non-alcoholic liquids (water, sodas, fruit juice) as well as the beer, wine or cocktails you've planned for your party. Ocean breezes can produce a huge thirst, and people will be reaching for something to drink almost as soon as you drop the mooring pennant.

Then there's the food: The rule here is: Keep it simple. "Finger foods" are good; so are the makings for build-it-yourself sandwiches. Soup served in a glass is okay, but no sloppy pies or stews, please; even at anchor your boat can be bouncy in a breeze. Fruit and your best cookies make a good dessert.

A sample menu:

Cold cucumber soup (buttermilk mixed with blender-grated, peeled cukes and seasoned with dill)

Baked chicken legs (your favorite recipe)

Raw vegetables (carrots, celery, dill pickles, zucchini, cauliflower, etc.) with dip

Sesame bread sticks (neater than bread)

Assorted fruit, cheeses and cookies.

A last suggestion: Try to time things so you and your guests can sail (or motor, if that's your bag) for at least an hour before dropping anchor at that scenic little cove to eat and drink. They'll really appreciate the meal by then. And be sure to let your guests take a hand at the tiller or wheel (especially if they've never done it before). There's nothing like playing skipper to make someone's day. □

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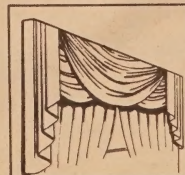
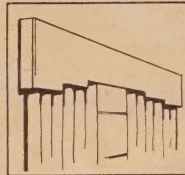
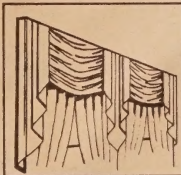
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BREAKFAST QUICHE CUPS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 8 crepes
(see recipe below) | 2 eggs, slightly
beaten |
| 4 bacon slices,
cooked and crumbled | ¼ cup grated
Swiss cheese |
| 1 package (8 oz.)
cream cheese,
softened | 2 tablespoons
chopped chives or
scallions |
| 2 tablespoons milk | ¼ teaspoon pepper |

Place crepes in 8 lightly greased muffin pans, press lightly to fit and fold over edges. Divide half the bacon among the crepes. Beat cream cheese with milk and eggs until smooth and blended. Add remaining ingredients and spoon over bacon in cups, using about 2 tablespoons for each.

Bake at 375 degrees for 20 minutes, until set. Garnish with remaining bacon and serve. Makes 4 servings.

CREPES: Combine 1 egg, slightly beaten, and ¾ cup milk in bowl. Add 2 teaspoons Maxim® 100% Freeze-Dried Coffee and ½ teaspoon sugar. Add ½ cup all-purpose flour, 1½ teaspoons oil and ¼ teaspoon salt; beat until smooth. Using 2 tablespoons batter for each crepe, bake in hot lightly greased 6-inch skillet until brown on both sides. Makes 8 crepes. To save time, crepes can be pre-made and frozen or refrigerated.

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Only in Rhode Island

By Elizabeth Morse-Chuley

Elsewhere in this issue, eight Rhode Islanders told us what they think of living here. In this space, one who lives here tells us what she thinks of Rhode Islanders.

A FRIEND OF MINE once told me of her first encounter with Rhode Island. She was in school in Ohio at the time and had just been hired over the phone for a job here.

She called her folks in Pennsylvania and asked them to check out the state for her, seeing as how they were only a few inches away on the map. While she awaited their call, she dreamily recalled the nifty things the travelogues had told of Olde New England: A land nestled in a Colonial time warp with rustic seaside taverns, quaint dialects, and lots of bearded men in oilskins eating clams. When her father called, he seemed a bit hesitant. "Yes, it seems to be quite pretty up here," he said, "but . . . ah . . . I think the people might be a tad strange."

She held her breath. Were they really cold and fishy and rude, like rumor told? "No," he replied, then whispered hurriedly, "but everywhere we went there were signs that said 'Shirts and Shoes Required.' Now, what the hell kind of people go runnin' around half naked!?"

Ho, ho, ho, I would have thought; such naive Midwestern notions. I never read the travelogues myself, but I never felt that I needed to, having grown up in nearby Massachusetts. It couldn't possibly be that different from my home town, now could it? I had grown up thinking that cannelloni was an Italian Renaissance painter and that pasta fagioli was a swear word. But even my travels through Europe, where the sights, sounds and

smells were reassuringly foreign, failed to prepare me for the true culture shock I experienced when I beamed down in Rhode Island. Somewhere on Route 195, I entered a black hole and re-emerged in a land where no one talked, cooked, or dressed the way I did.

Granted, my "accent" (as the natives call it) is a warped Bostonian, and I sometimes lapse indiscreetly into a "bahth" or a "hahlf" (as opposed to "bay-eth" and "hay-ef"), but even my teaching stint in Fall River didn't condition me for the ear-grating, nasal speech and the bewildering array of complementary gesticulations that confront me. "Whadzameddawahichew?" is in no dictionary I've ever perused. If I ask for directions, I have to decide whether to follow the words

or the hands, but never both. Either way, no matter where I'm trying to get, I end up in Cranston.

And then there's the food. I always thought that my English-Irish relatives ate some pretty strange fare, all boiled down to an unappetizing glop, but at least I could identify the potatoes ("buh-day-duz"). Here, a look at the topological permutations on the pasta aisle is enough to drive me bonkers. Potatoes come with or without eyes. Period. Even the more exotic vittles of my home town, like linguica or kale soup, are here relegated to the import aisle. (My great-aunt Mary refused to eat either, convinced that she'd grow a moustache. But, then again, she was also convinced that vacuum cleaners are possessed.)

Then there was the time, a few years ago, when I visited a friend whose apartment-mate was a budding gourmet. I found the kitchen sink smeared with what appeared to be ink. "Did your fountain pen self-destruct?" I asked wittily. At that moment, the apartment-mate emerged from the pantry, proffering a slurping, gelatinous escapee from a grade-B horror movie. "Staying for dinner? Nice, fresh squid," he tempted. "I'm gonna be sick," I gurgled, lurching for the door.

But it is the sartorial side of Rhode Island that never ceases to amaze me. Where I grew up, depending upon which side of the city you came from, you wore either John Meyers or black. Here, it's Calvin Klein or Carmen Miranda.

The spawning grounds of these indigenous creatures would appear to be the malls. Half of them are Tony Orlando clones who shave off their sideburns and blow-dry their chests. The other half, the matching girlfriends, mince on shoes formerly restricted to combat zones and suffocate in skirts they must have been poured into, causing their lips to pucker and turn brick-red. And everybody wears the totems, those little gold spoons. As they be-bop about to the piped-in pulse of disco and conduct their arcane rituals, I, the foreigner, flee for fear that I, too, shall be transmogrified.

Once in a while, in the hinterlands of the state, I do run across a bona-fide lumper or a salt-rimmed swamp Yankee. And, indeed, there are seaside taverns (serving pizza); people who say "Ay-uh," and men eating clams (casino) in Rhode Island.

But then, you can find such ephemera anywhere in New England. I guess it's what you find only in Rhode Island that makes it worth settling here.

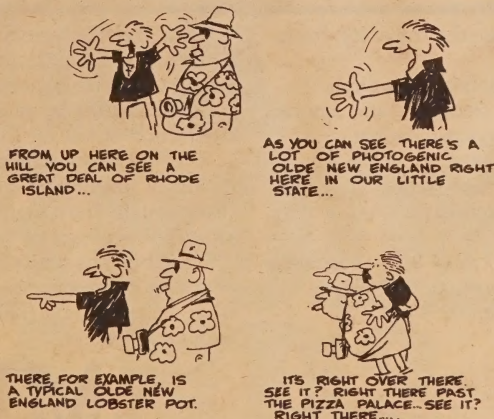


Illustration: Bob Selby

Elizabeth Morse-Chuley lives in Pawtucket and teaches writing at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston.

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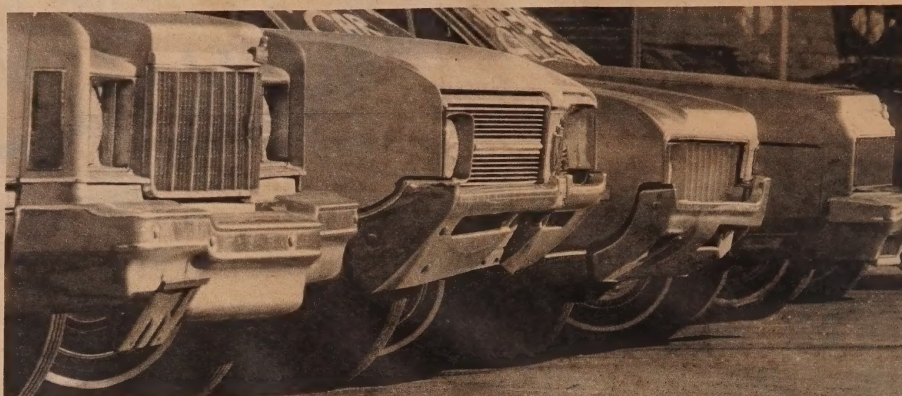
ALSO INSIDE:

A look at Providence
150 years ago, when
the *Journal* was born
page 26

Good Life: Tips on
entertaining afloat
page 36

Edited
By Lorraine
Hopkins

If you have the gas to get there, Middleboro has a flea market for cars



William K. Daby

IF YOUR CAR'S getting to be a drag, you can try unloading it at a flea market these days. That's if you have enough gas to drive it to Middleboro, Massachusetts.

Richard Manet of Taunton came up with the idea of a flea market just for cars, trucks, vans, campers, boats, even planes. It started June 2, and has been continuing — Saturdays only —

from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on 32 acres of meadowland on Route 28 in Middleboro, a quarter-mile east of the Middleboro rotary.

If you're selling, it costs \$10 to buy

the space, and if you're just looking, it's 50 cents to get in.

To get there from Providence, take Route 44 East, then pick up Route 28.

We couldn't show you a picture of Cubby, the \$500,000 St. Bernard, but here's his attorney

IT'S DOG eat dog in the news business, as lawyer Hugo Ricci is finding out.

He represents the owners of a dead



George H. McAllister, Jr.

dog who think their grief is worth a half-million dollars.

His clients, Salvatore and Anna Compagnone of 60 Leo Street, Providence, are suing the East Providence vets who treated Cubby, their Saint Bernard. Cubby, says Mrs. Compagnone, "was like family."

Once the story hit the local papers, the wire services and, subsequently, the *New York Times*, Ricci had a ticklish media event on his hands. How to manage the publicity without jeopardizing his client's case?

It became a shaggy dog story, indeed.

A family photograph of the dog, requested for publication here, evoked high drama, partially because of a reported bid for it from *Boston Magazine*.

A spokeswoman for the magazine denied all. And laughed.

Mrs. Compagnone was ready to hand over the photo but, at Ricci's order, fled from a reporter.

We wanted to show you a picture of Cubby. Instead, here's Hugo.

— By Martha Smith



Andy Dickerman.

Club gets \$125,000, and that's a lot of clams

IT ISN'T THAT they don't have clambakes at the Newport Clambake Club. They do, and they're swell; but mostly the club's just a social one for Newport gentlemen like Thomas Carr Watson. At the moment, it's \$125,000 richer because of Watson.

Watson was a Jamestown gentleman farmer who died last spring, and his \$125,000 bequest to the Clambakers was one of a dozen totaling \$12 million that went to Rhode Island beneficiaries. Watson had had a seat on the New York Stock Exchange for

years, and was a Brown alumnus, although Brown didn't turn up in his will.

"He'd been a member for a considerable period, a governor at the time of his death," said Alan Schumacher, Clambake Club president. "He was a bachelor, you see, and he enjoyed the friendship of the club."

The club, which dates to 1895, is on Easton's Point at the end of Tuckerman Avenue in Middletown. Its clambakes on Labor Day are a long standing tradition.

SUNDAY JOURNAL
Magazine

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Production

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You just won't believe it's a low 'tar' menthol.

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THE PUZZLE

No.14

By Don Rubin



- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| — Vault | — Battery room | — Film processing | — Computer center |
| — Spectators | — Telex | — Portage | — Warm-up room |
| — Washrooms | — Water | — Use other door right | — Men |
| — Shopping center | — Speakers | — Women athletes | — Television |
| — Meter setting | — Do not touch | — Men athletes | — Air |
| — Rest area | — Lockers | — Measurements room | — Refreshments |
| — Modern pentation | — Television sets | — Plumbers | — Salmaker |
| — Gymnastics | — OOD parcels | — Boat repairs | — Picnic |
| — Judo | — Women | — Flowers | — Interpreters |
| — Lock box lobby | — Souvenirs | — Programs | — Relaxation room |
| — No boat launching | — Boiler plant | — Results room | — Meeting point |
| — Sauna | — Salekeeping room | — Hospitality | — Fire service |
| — Congress room | — Sponges | — Please remove shoes | — Use other door left |
| — Electricity | — Facsimile | | — Mechanical room |

To enter

Mail solutions (one entry per person) to: The Puzzle, *Sunday Journal Magazine*, 75 Fountain Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02902, no later than one week after the issue date. Include your name, address, shirt size and number of The Puzzle on your entry, and *entry envelope*. (*Journal-Bulletin* employees and members of their immediate families are not eligible.) Puzzle T-Shirts are awarded to 10 winners. Judges' decisions final. (The Puzzle, © 1979 *The Real Paper*.)

Winners of Puzzle No. 11

The 10 winners, chosen by lot, are: H. Joan O'Gara, Cumberland; Howard A. Lindstrom, West Warwick; Marilyn A. Miele, Cranston; Karen Pepper, Warwick; Bernard R. Tyrell, West Warwick; Angela V. Ruggiero, Bristol; Peter Baguchinsky, Pawtucket; J.A. Generali, Johnston; Dale Greco, Warwick, and Suzanne Sousa, West Warwick



Solution to Puzzle No. 11

Gilda Radner (a.k.a. Roseanne Roseanna D'Anna) from NBC's *Saturday Night Live*. Steve Smith, our puzzle editor, said some of the most common incorrect answers were: Valerie Harper, Linda Lavin, Rita Coolidge, Jacqueline Onassis, Jimmy Carter, Miss Piggy and Lassie.

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D. "Morocco" - A framed cloth woven with contrasting "Berber" yarns. Completely washable, no-iron blend of acrylic and polyester. Champagne, blue or rust.

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60x86" Oblong/Oval Reg. 18.00 15.99

60x106" Oblong/Oval Reg. 22.00 19.99

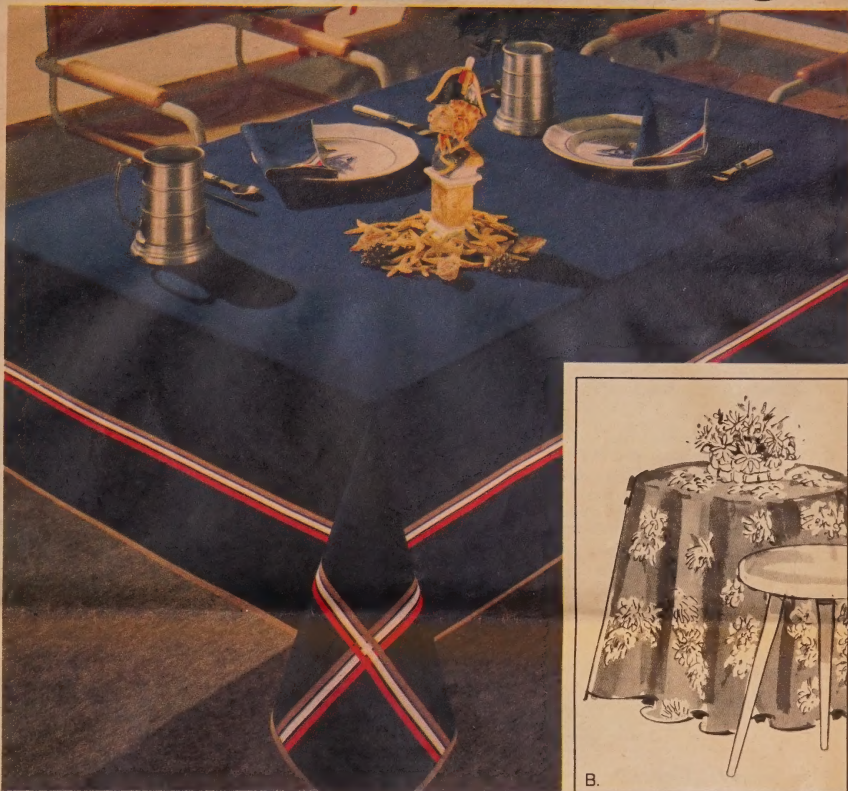
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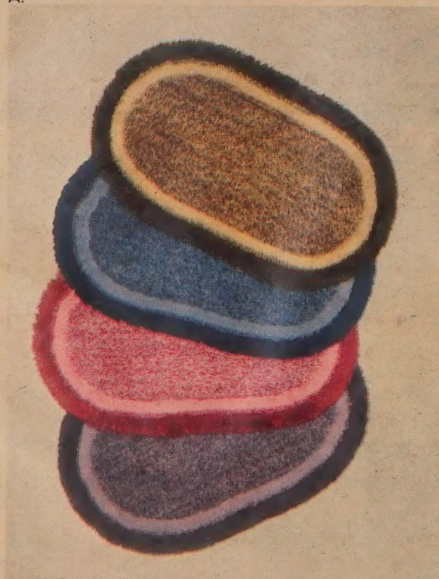
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A.



B.



C.

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Ask Rhode Islanders what they think of their state, and you conceivably could end up with 927,000 different answers. We are presenting only eight, and make no claim that they constitute a representative sampling. But there's a lot to think about in what these people have to say, and even more to react to — perhaps violently.

The eight viewpoints presented here were selected from nearly three times as many tape-recorded and edited interviews with a broad range of Rhode Islanders. The whole project was carried out last year by Beverly Powell, then a student at Brown, now a writer and researcher for LINK, a consulting group working with the latest communications technology in New York City.

She asked for opinions on our state, and that's what she got, mostly. But you may be struck, as we were, less by what these eight Rhode Islanders have to say about this place than by what they reveal about themselves, as individuals who happen to live in Rhode Island. That, as always, is part of the fun in an exercise of this sort.

WHAT DO PEOPLE REALLY THINK OF RHODE ISLAND?



Photography: Constance Brown

'My sister got married and moved to Florida. We couldn't believe it. We'd never think of living anywhere else.'

Brad Lussier of Coventry; minister, Community Baptist Church, West Greenwich

I"VE NEVER traveled anywhere so I have very little to compare Rhode Island to. I grew up seven miles from here in West Greenwich.

I hated, *hated* the country when I was a kid, 'cause you couldn't do anything. No place to go. Oh, what a drag! I was 10 years old when a kid went by on the street — on a bike! And my mother had to hold me back. "Mom, there's a kid. There's a kid. There's another kid!" I had sisters and this was a boy, on a boy's bike, going up the road! I said, "Mom. Mom, do kids live around here? Where are

they?" Up the street there was a new family. My parents didn't see me for a week!

When I started school, there were four rooms in the building. I was in the same classroom with my sister, who was a year older than me. The next year, they put an addition on the school so every class could have its own room. Wow! Little bathroom in each room and everything. And lockers you could reach!

My first exposure to anything but West Greenwich was Brown University. Providence was the big city to us. Imagine what we were coming from!

I got to the city and that was neat. Really! You could get up in the mid-

dle of the night, and there was always somebody around and something to do.

I thought when I went to Brown that they had anything that you wanted to study. I think I feel that way about Rhode Island: Most everything that you want to find, if it doesn't already exist, you can begin. I think in a lot of other places, you can't.

There's a lot of things here you can't get elsewhere: culture, the historical point of view, and a whole bunch of different kinds of people.

If I were trying to "sell" the state, I'd say we have Trinity Square Theater; we have some of the best schools — if you're thinking about oceanography, URI is one of the best. Then if you're looking for activities, there is the ocean and Narragansett Bay. You've also got enough woods, if you want that; just lots of shopping, and all the rest.

We just wouldn't think about living anywhere else.

When my sister got married and moved to Florida, we couldn't believe it. You don't do that kind of thing. It just doesn't happen!

From time to time I do think I'd like to go out here or there. But we go away for a weekend, and the first night we're away I start thinking about how long it's going to be before I'm home. It's funny that way. Same kind of thing with my dad. It just feels funny for us.

I don't like everything about Rhode Island, though. There must be 500,000 things about it that I don't like. I guess you just get used to them, and you just don't even think that this could be changed or that could be changed.

The roads around the state stink! They are bad! That bothers me. It's not only the condition of the roads, but the volume of traffic they have to handle.

I wish we had another newspaper, too. I don't think the coverage is incomplete, but it loses perspective, 'cause we've only got one. I don't think we get news reporting with the balance that some of the other places do. I know they have to stick with the city, but sometimes I think there are things out here that are very important that I'd like to know about and see what happened, and they give very brief reporting.

And the government stinks, it's all one-sided. I don't think that one side is better than the other, I just think there should be more balance. Democrats own the state. You could have crooks all over the place, but no one's telling on anybody. □

'We're probably too close to Washington. Sometimes it takes up to two years to get approvals. A Texan I met said they don't bother with EPA. They argue with them later.'

Joseph S. "Dody" Sinclair, of Providence and Narragansett, chairman of the board, Outlet Company

IDON'T KNOW what you want to call it, but there certainly is a resurgence in Rhode Island for renewal at the moment. You have it in Newport. You have a lot of it going on in Providence, and some of it where I live in Narragansett. There's a subtle community spirit in these places. It's very quiet. Maybe that is just the way we do things in New England.

In Providence's case, I don't know whether the city will ever come back to where it might have been, but it certainly is not going to be anywhere near as bad as it has been in the past.

A lot of the renewal everywhere is based on federal funds, but more than that, it's the initiative of either an individual or a group of individuals getting together to push something, and here you need a partnership. You need a partnership of business, labor and certainly a politician to clear the way and help things along and push. I'm not fussy whether the politician is just doing it to get himself reelected or what. I'm more interested in getting it done.

I remember this Texan I met who said he was getting ready to build, so he was clearing the field because they

were going to do some excavating and foundation work the next day. I said, "What about the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)?" He said, "We don't bother with that down here. We argue with them later."

Up here, unfortunately, we're probably too close to Washington, so we have to get all the clearances, all these approvals. Some things get pretty ridiculous. Sometimes, it takes up to two years.

Rhode Island really is a city/state, to a great extent. It's one of the few states, I think, where the elected officials are known by their first name and always have been and probably always will be.

Rhode Island is a democratic state, and I think it's safe to say Rhode Island is a labor state. To be elected as a Republican you have to be damned good or be well-known and be trusted. There have not been many Republicans that have been elected in this state, the Democratic Party controls it.

That doesn't mean the Democratic Party has put up bad candidates. We have some excellent people, there is no doubt about it; but if you were a young person and wanted to go into politics you sort of have a tough choice to make. If you want to go in as a Republican, you have a real bad row to hoe. If you want to join the

through that's going to the Democratic side, then you have to fight like hell in order to get on the ticket because everybody else is in there fighting against you.

I think it would be better for the state, if the balance were a little more even. I don't think any party can put up 100% good candidates. I think it would be silly to say that.

From a living point of view, I would think Rhode Island would rate very, very high on anybody's scale.

I think there is an awful lot here for people if they have initiative to take advantage of it. It's there. It's similar to the complaint people have about television: They don't have this on television, or they don't have that on television. If they would show some initiative and look and search they could find what they want. Now, it may not be at 9 p.m. at night when they want it, it may be at 8 p.m., but it's there.

You can occupy yourself all summer in Rhode Island going to theaters and never see the same thing twice. I think there is enough amateur, semi-professional and professional theater in Rhode Island to satisfy a lot of demand. And if it's not in Rhode Island, it's certainly conveniently located an hour away in Boston.

I think it kind of makes it more fun to have to dig for it. □



Providence is a gay ghetto. Ghettos grow up in cities where there has been a lot of blight. They thrive on neglect.'

Marge Ragona of North Providence; pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church, Providence

MY FIRST IMPRESSION of Rhode Island, back about three years ago when I was transferred here, was that it was almost a rural state. I got a very different impression being in Providence.

Providence is a gay ghetto. Gay ghettos grow up in cities where there has been a lot of blight and there is a lot of neglect. Gays thrive on neglect. When a city is just ignoring many of its minority groups, it is possible for gays to come in and live very comfortably due to benign neglect. It makes very comfortable places for gays to get lost. There has been a great draw for gays from other parts of New England, particularly Maine and New Hampshire, to come down to Providence and live in this area. Many of the gays in this area are from up north.

But when a city is going through transition, for example, in areas where property is either very cheap or rents are low, police protection and what-not is not being provided.

Overt discrimination by the police department is a very real factor. Since we have had the new police chief here in Providence, we have gotten increasing reports of police harassment of gays.

At night, in bars, or most particularly when the bars are closing, people have been harassed by the police, just hassled, not arrested, not really hurt, but mostly just hassled.

I remember one night, my deacon, who is a Franciscan with a very gentle temperament, had been sent down to a bar to contact someone. As he was coming out of the bar — he was in a collar — he was stopped by a policeman and given a rough time by the policeman, who also had ticketed his



Photography: Constance Brown

car. And when he asked why at that particular place on a Sunday evening was he being given a ticket, the policeman told him he could take it to court. The ticket was not filled out properly, and was dated for the next day so it could not be proved that he had been given the ticket on a Sunday.

Things like that let us know that the police here have been given the word to make it tough for gays.

Most of the churches present an extremely severe problem, too. I think most of them really wish that gay people would disappear, they just don't want to handle it. They don't want to deal with the problems. So many people see homosexuality as an immorality. The needs of gay people are just not met, particularly by the churches.

One of the things that we, within the gay community, have provided is Gay Community Services of R.I. We provide a help line for people seeking counseling and assistance in trying to find out how to work through the system. People in need of friendship, caring, or what-have-you can call the help line and are referred to the appropriate services. Of course, Metropolitan Community Church tries to provide for the needs of gays who want to function within the mainline of Christianity, and we do provide an alternative church for them.

Our church works in and with the gay community as spiritual leader, nurturer, counselor.

We provide worship services, we provide social activities. For people who don't want to spend all of their lives in bars, this is a very necessary part of what we do.

There is a drawing together of the community and the need to work together. So I think there will be a greater ability to work together to see to it that this doesn't happen to us again.

gay community news

Vol. 5, No. 22

December 3, 1977

The Gay Weekly 35¢

Harry Allard & The Storyteller's Art



From *The Stupids Step Out*, Artwork by James Marshall

"Bath time!" said Mrs. Stupid.
"Everyone into the tub," ordered Mr. Stupid.
"But where's the water?" asked Petunia.
"Don't be stupid," said Stanley. "If we fill the tub, our clothes will get wet."

Sally Piano & Oscar Wilde Reviews Houston Women's Conference, p.1

Feminist Issues Pass Overwhelmingly

Houston Conference Approves Lesbian Rights

By Jane R. Marlowe

HOUSTON, Texas — Resolutions favoring lesbian rights, the Equal Rights Amendment, and a host of other feminist issues passed overwhelmingly at the International Women's Year Conference held the weekend of Nov. 18-20 in Houston. The conference, which was attended by more than 2,000 women, was described by National IWY Commission presiding officer Bella Abzug as "the most diverse meeting of American women ever held in this country." Although 15,000 anti-feminist women demonstrated in Houston during the weekend, there were no disruptions at the conference itself.

The meeting was originally conceived in 1975, with the U.S. Congress providing \$5 million in funding. Delegates to the Houston conference were elected at individual state conferences. The state conferences also drew up a 26-point *National Plan of Action* that would "identify the barriers that prevent women from participating fully and equally in all aspects of national life" and find ways to remove them. Lesbian rights was approved at 30 of the 50 state meetings and thus qualified to be part of the *Plan of Action*.

Five of the 26 resolutions voted on at Houston were considered to be controversial, high-pressure issues. These included endorsement of the ERA, a proposal for federally funded child care programs, abortion rights, support of lesbian rights, and a demand

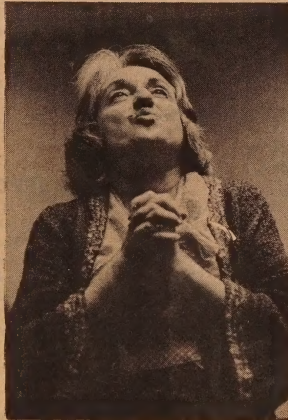


Photo by Sandy Seigward

Betty Friedan

that a cabinet-level women's department be established by Jimmy Carter.

Because of the disturbances caused at many state conferences by right-wing groups such as the John Birch Society and the Ku Klux Klan, some disruption at the national meeting was expected. However, there were no major altercations, and many delegates were surprised by the spirit of solidarity and sisterhood that prevailed. The main problems were a result of waiting in outrageously long lines at hotels and rest rooms, and, to some extent, the

complaints of conservative factions which felt that they had not been allowed to properly air their views.

All of the items in the Plan passed, except for the one recommending that the President establish a cabinet-level position to deal with women's issues.

The lesbian rights issue was a highly volatile one, and it was feared that a split on this issue would detract from the support of other major issues, especially the ERA. Jean O'Leary, the only avowed lesbian on the IWY Commission, was worried about the passage of this resolution: "If it looks like we won't get to it, we may amend other resolutions, like employment, to include lesbian rights questions," she said before the vote.

Betty Friedan, a founder of the modern women's movement, strongly disagreed with this. "Realistically," she said, "there is only one issue for women this year and that's the Equal Rights Amendment. Any group that puts their issue ahead of that is playing right in the hands of the right wing. I think everything else is subsidiary. We can't quibble at this point."

However, Friedan acted to help alleviate this situation by making a speech urging the convention to pass the lesbian rights resolution. This speech made a great impact. She said, "As a woman who has perhaps loved men too well, I have had trouble on this issue. This issue has divided us too long. I believe we should help the lesbians be protected in their civil rights."

Three Massachusetts women who

attended the conference, Leslie Cagan, Barbara Smith, and Diane DeMillo, shared their impressions at a news conference after returning from Houston. They felt that Friedman's convincing argument was very inspirational, and that many women finally felt that it was in the interest of all women to support lesbians.

Smith felt that a major point was that, for the first time, women who had never met any gay women were seeing that they really weren't different. Cagan added that besides meeting lesbians in their delegations, these women were getting the chance to interact with them on a more social level, dining and standing in lines together.

They said that the mood on the floor was extremely tense and volatile when the sexual preference resolution was being debated. According to DeMillo, "There was a lot of anticipation. We knew that the controversial issues were at the end, and when it was close to a sexual preference vote, we wondered if people who had been voting pro-Plan would vote against this issue." She also mentioned some apprehension about the lesbian mother issue, fearing that the vote might be affected by delegates who felt that sexual preference is an individual choice, but lesbians should not be able to raise children. These fears did not materialize, as the vote overwhelmingly favored gay rights.

Sentiments surrounding the issue

Continued on page 7

Accusations Against Koch 'Groundless,' City Report Says

NEW YORK — Reports which circulated in the last days of the city's mayoral campaign claiming that Democratic nominee Rep. Edward I. Koch had been beaten up by a homosexual lover but had declined to press charges have been found groundless by the city's Department of Investigation. The probe by Investigation Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta was made at the request of Mayor-Elect Koch.

The rumors became public knowledge just before the vote when it was revealed that the Associated Press had prepared an article, detailing but not substantiating the charges. The article was never released. Koch supporters asserted that aides to Liberal Party mayoral candidate Mario Cuomo were behind a campaign to "smear" Koch by spreading rumors that he was gay. Additional reports stated that Police Patrolmen's Benevolent Association President Samuel DiMilia had similar information about Koch. DiMilia later denied that he ever had such information or had threatened to use it.

After taking sworn testimony from witnesses, including DeMilia, and examining relevant documents, the Investigations Department concluded, "Although it was reported that at one time Mr. DeMilia had allegedly received information alleging that Mr. Koch had not pursued a criminal complaint, all

of the evidence, including the testimony of Mr. DiMilia himself, establishes that Mr. DiMilia does not now have nor did he ever have any evidence to substantiate such information.

"Furthermore, there is no evidence whatsoever that Mr. Koch had ever refused to pursue any criminal case." The report noted that, after a search of

65,000 police records, the only case in which Koch had been a complainant was a criminal harassment case in 1972. At that time, a panhandler had accosted Koch in Washington Square Park and demanded money. The man was found guilty and fined \$50.

A spokesperson for the Mayor-Elect said that Koch "considered the matter

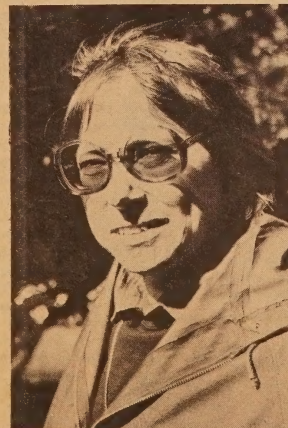
closed." "I felt that the seriousness of the charges and rumors raised during the campaign warranted a full investigation. Mr. Scoppetta has made that investigation and found there is absolutely no truth to the charges and rumors," said the aide, quoting Koch.

Harvard Law Teach-In Critical of Burger Court

By Gordon Gottlieb

The Supreme Court violates the separation of church and state when it bases its anti-gay decisions on Biblical texts, Rev. Marge Ragona told 200 law students assembled to protest Chief Justice Warren Burger's planned appearance at Harvard Law School Nov. 17. "It is tragic that our folklore and mythology still affect our lives 3,000 years later . . . All of us must continue to protest—in the courts and in the streets," she stated.

The newly appointed minister of Providence's Metropolitan Community Church was one of four speakers participating in the anti-Burger Court teach-in. Burger, who was to have judged a student-run moot court case, decided not to attend at the last minute, due to a bad back. The teach-in went on as planned, according to moderator Margaret Montoya, since "we are here to address the policies of the Burger Court and not to focus on the



Rev. Marge Ragona

personalities."

The teach-in was co-sponsored by 16 political organizations, including the National Lawyers Guild, the Black and Chicano Law Student Associations and the Ad Hoc Committee of Gay Law Students. Other speakers included the General Counsel of the National Council of Black Students who denounced the Burger Court as "racist to the core and insensitive to the needs of poor and black people."

Meanwhile, an open letter strongly critical of the policies of the Burger Court was signed by 467 members of the Harvard Law School community. The signers of the letter expressed their "outrage at the consistent opposition the Supreme Court under Chief Justice Burger has shown towards the advancement of human rights. The Court has responded with callous indifference to the urgent claims of those seeking justice through the legal system."

news notes

BRIGGS BOMB PLOT FOILED

LOS ANGELES — Five persons have been arrested in Los Angeles and Houston in connection with an alleged plot to bomb the office of California State Senator John Briggs. One of the men arrested, Clayton Van Lydegraf, was identified by the FBI as the head of the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, the above-ground faction of the Weather Underground. Van Lydegraf was accused of attempting to recruit people to join the group, whose reported objectives were the assassination of public figures and the bombing of public buildings.

Sen. Briggs is one of the principal opponents of gay rights in California. He had introduced a statewide initiative to permit school boards to fire gay teachers, but the initiative was withdrawn last month because of the threat of a lawsuit. However, none of the five people arrested have been visible in California gay politics and it is not known if Briggs' anti-gay activities provided the motivation for the alleged plan.

BACKING FROM THE BISHOP

SAN FRANCISCO — The Right Rev. C. Kilmer Myers, Episcopal Bishop of California, has endorsed the ordination of women and homosexuals to the priesthood, *The Sentinel* reports. In a statement to the 128th Episcopal Convention, Myers stated, "To be a Christian is to be radically human. The model for humanness is Jesus. I know many homosexuals who are radically human. To desert them would be a desertion."

The Bishop, who has re-licensed openly lesbian Episcopal priest, Mary Ellen Barrett, noted that "to hurry one's self in the question of the priest's homosexuality and sexuality is to lose sight of the true meaning of the church."

ENGLAND'S BRYANT

LONDON, ENGLAND — Anti-pornography crusader Mary Whitehouse, who successfully brought London's *Gay News* to trial recently on charges of "blasphemy," is emerging as England's answer to Anita Bryant. In a recent speech Whitehouse asserted that the gay movement is one of 40 "strategies" a Communist plot to "destroy Western Civilization." The plan, she claimed, was to "present homosexual degeneracy as normal and healthy."

In another address, Whitehouse used the same strategy that Bryant used so successfully in Dade County — to link homosexuals with child molestation and "recruitment." "I believe that homosexual relationships are wrong . . . the same as I believe that lustful use of children in pornographic magazines is wrong." The *Gay News* reported her as saying "The fact that whenever they can, homosexuals take their leaflets and go into the school and try and influence children is also wrong."

A poll by the right-wing London newspaper *The Daily Mail*, listed Whitehouse as one of the ten "most obnoxious" public personalities.

FILM BENEFIT

NEW HAVEN, CONN. — "In the Best Interests of the Children," a film about lesbian mothers, will be shown to benefit the Connecticut Gay Task Force's Educational and Legal Defense Fund. The showing will take place on Sunday, December 4, at the Women's Center, 148 Orange Street, New Haven. Admission is \$2 and there will be a roundtable discussion after the film.

BRYANT TO WICHITA

WICHITA, Kan. — Singer and anti-gay crusader Anita Bryant is scheduled to come to Wichita on Dec. 6 to participate in the "Revive America Crusade." The visit would be Bryant's second to Wichita since the city council passed a gay rights ordinance on Sept. 17. Bryant stopped at the Wichita airport last month to confer with members of "Concerned Citizens for Community Standards," a group which has launched a petition drive to repeal the ordinance. "My heart's desire is to do what I can to stand against sin in this country," Bryant said at that time.

Bryant is scheduled to be the featured speaker at the December rally. Although the Crusade will not focus exclusively on the issue of homosexuality, "the subject will be one of the items discussed," said rally organizer Cecil Todd.



MCC AT MID-WEEK

BOSTON — Starting Wednesday, November 30, at 8PM there will be a mid-week service at Boston's Metropolitan Community Church. The service is described as "informal, with a time of praise to the Lord, sharing the word, testimonies, small prayer groups and plenty of spirited singing." Services are held at the Old West Church, 131 Cambridge Street, Boston.

'KIDNAPPING' DROPPED

BATON ROUGE, LA. — Kidnapping charges against Baton Rouge gay activist Huey Beverly have been dismissed after Beverly charged that the charges had been pressed to embarrass him because of his gay rights advocacy. Beverly was charged with kidnapping, aggravated assault, and simple battery, in the case of the alleged abduction of a 17 year old hitchhiker.

"These bogus charges were used to discredit, embarrass, humiliate, and 'criminalize' me," Beverly told Houston's *Monitrose Star*. Beverly also claimed that there was "no bona-fide complainant," and labelled the young man was "a stooge and pimp of the police and police department."

Beverly's attorney had originally advised him to plead guilty and accept probation. However, Beverly then fired his attorney and acted as his own counsel. In the end, the complainant in the case dropped all charges.

SUPPORTIVE LESBIAN RAP

BOSTON — A support group for lesbians dealing with separation, loneliness, holiday blues, and the exploration of new options will meet for seven Mondays, starting November 28. The group meets from 7-9PM at Janus House, 21 Bay Street, Cambridge. Donation is \$1 and coffee and cookies are served. For more information, call Janus House at 661-2537, and leave a message for Gail.

COMING OUT RAP

BOSTON — The CLEARSPACE basic introductory course 'Coming Out', open to any lesbian woman or gay man, is being conducted on November 28, December 5, 12, 19 from 7:30-9:30 PM at 126 Beacon Street, 3rd fl. Boston. This 4 week course, co-sponsored by the Emerson College Homophile Organization and CLEARSPACE, the projected Gay Community Center, is available without charge although free will donations are encouraged.

DID YOU SEE?

TIME

THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

She has received death threats — and been socked in the face with a banana cream pie. When she showed up in Manhattan to tape an appearance for the *Today* show, NBC was so worried for her safety that guards spirited her out of the building after the performance. She called off a press conference at the nearby Hilton Hotel because of warnings that hostile demonstrators would be in the streets. Appearing in St. Petersburg, Fla., last week, she had to change hotels for security reasons. The victim is Singer Anita Bryant, 37; her tormentors are radical gay activists, mostly male; and their fight, a bitter one from the beginning, has taken an ugly turn.

Bryant's agent and husband Bob Green says, her take from show business has dropped by 70% since the Dade County election. That is difficult to confirm, as is Bryant's charge that "conventions have been totally inhibited from booking us." Bryant still performs around the country, singing and speaking at conventions, church meetings and conservative get-togethers. Sometimes she seems to be benefiting from the furor. When she was picketed in St. Petersburg last week, lagging ticket sales perked up; she played to a full house of 2,000, and 200 peo-

ple were turned away. She acknowledges that the fight has hyped sales of her eighth book, *The Anita Bryant Story*, in which she stresses, in evangelical terms, her personal relationship with God. She also writes: "I don't hate homosexuals. I pray for them."

Bryant claims that the homosexuals have pressured the networks into blacklisting her from talk shows — an unlikely charge, which the networks deny. She did, after all, appear on the *Today* show. Here and there, notably in the gay rights stronghold of California, campaigns have been attempted to keep her off the air. Though some religious stations in Texas have received increasing numbers of calls to let her sing out, no record company has bought the recent single that she recorded on her own. Its title: *There's Nothing Like the Love Between a Woman and a Man*.

"We just want to get back to leading normal lives," says Green. "This is no fun and games." The gays, he contends, "are haunting us wherever we go. They won't let her alone." Adds Anita: "I'm not intimidated by what they do. They are making fools of themselves."

— *Time Magazine*, November 21, 1977.

Boston Health Service Enters 'New Phase'

by John Fowler

BOSTON — Under recently appointed director Sue Rosen, Boston's Homophile Community Health Service is entering what might be called a "new phase." From an "alternative" counseling service that opened in a church basement seven years ago, HCHS has become a highly structured, professional therapy clinic, with staffing and supervisory patterns similar to those of more traditional mental health centers. "We're stabilizing," said Rosen. "For the first time, we're in a position to do long-range planning."

Since opening in 1971, HCHS has helped in excess of 2,000 area gays in dealing with coming out, depression, alcoholism, family and marital problems. Extensive community education and training programs for therapists and gay people round out the Service's wide spectrum of programs.

Finances are a major area for long-range planning. HCHS is supported almost entirely by clients' fees, which work on a sliding scale from \$15 to \$30, with most fees averaging at the lower end of the scale. First time visitors are charged \$20 and are introduced to the variety of programs available: individual, group, or couple counseling (including therapy for parents of gays, children of gays, entire



Photo by Neil Miller

Susan Rosen

families, and married couples in which one member is gay), unemployment counseling, and the crisis service. At this initial screening session, clients decided how best to make use of the programs and staff at HCHS.

Rosen, who comes to HCHS from the Institute for Human Identity in New York, administers a program with a paid staff of seven and a volunteer staff of 22 therapists. The paid staff is made up of experienced professional psychotherapists from a variety of backgrounds including psychiatry, psy-

chology, and psychiatric nursing. Volunteer therapists at HCHS are primarily younger professionals with similar educational backgrounds. Some clinical volunteers are advanced interns representing various Boston area graduate programs in the mental health professions. All therapists, both paid and volunteer, work under psychiatric supervision.

Approximately half the staff are women, yet some 70% of the total caseload is male. "We'd like to attract more women," Rosen commented, adding, "we have to compete, of course, with the feminist therapy collectives which may seem more attractive to women."

In spite of the ever increasing caseload and the broad diversification of programs over the years, HCHS is not without its problems. In the past, funding has come principally from clients' fees and from grants, with little help coming from the gay community.

"We've depended for donations on a small core of friends," Rosen explains. "Most of our supporters otherwise have been less affluent gays who given time rather than money. We're applying to United Way this year, and to several foundations, but we'd like to see more financial support from afflu-

ent gays and from sympathetic heterosexuals."

"We want to get the message out," says Rosen, "that we're doing solid work here." An institute-level training program is one of the potential directions for HCHS, assuming that its financial system can be maintained. In April, the grant which funds the extensive Family Services program at HCHS will end. In June, state money which supports the Alcoholism Program will run out. While new alternatives are sought, the clinic is looking to the gay community for long-term backing. States Rosen, "Well-to-do gays give to straight organizations that provide mental health services. We are the mental health agency for the gay community, but we don't get the support."

The Homophile Community Health Service may be reached by calling 542-5188 for more information about the programs it offers to the gay community. Boston Gay Hotline (counseling and community information) is 426-9371. Persons with experience in the mental health field, or as administrative assistants, fundraisers, publicity workers, or speakers are encouraged to contact HCHS by calling or writing to 80 Boylston, Suite 855, Boston 02116.

Massachusetts Episcopalians Support Rights

By Lisa Nussbaum

BOSTON — On the recommendation of its Commission on Human Sexuality, this year's convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts passed a resolution on Nov. 5 favoring full civil rights for gay people.

The resolution, in essence, acknowledges the practice of discrimination against gay people in many areas of life; affirms the need to establish civil rights protections; and urges the parishes, missions and other bodies of the Episcopal Diocese to press for enactment of these protections.

The Commission, an appointed intra-church group of 17 (about half of whom are priests and half are lay people), originally took up a body of

questions dealing with sexuality, including abortion, changing roles of men and women, homosexuality and the changing nature of the family. The Commission pared down the list to homosexuality alone after determining that the questions were too many and too broad to all be taken together. In reference to homosexuality, members sought to address two questions: (1) Is homosexuality a sin? and (2) Should gay people be ordained as priests?

After failing to reach consensus on either of the two questions, the Commission sought other common ground on the issue of homosexuality. In the words of John C. Lawrence, the only openly gay person on the Commission and vice president of Integrity/Internation-

al, "homosexuality looms large as the big divider issue at the next National Convention [in 1979]. Our wish was to come out with a position on homosexuality to take to the convention." Also, defeat of the Massachusetts gay rights bill, the recent Supreme Court decision and other setbacks emphasized the need to frame a position, Lawrence explained.

Gay civil rights became the point which won almost unanimous support from Commission members. The resolution, written by priest Mike Shirley of St. Andrews Church, Belmont, went before the statewide convention and, owing to nearly unanimous backing by the Commission, it passed quite handily on a voice vote preceded by

about 45 minutes of debate. The Diocese generally does not ignore the recommendation of a church-appointed commission on a resolution, especially when it has nearly unanimous backing, said Lawrence.

The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts now, in effect, goes on record as supporting civil rights for gay people. As for the Diocese taking on an activist role in promoting civil rights legislation, Lawrence says that it can be called on to make statements in support of such legislation, but probably wouldn't do so unless asked. His feeling is that the Diocese will have to be reminded to enunciate its support when the gay rights bill comes up again in the state legislature.

N.H. Teacher Claims Anti-Gay Stand Cost Him Jobs

MANCHESTER, NH — A former University of New Hampshire trustee has charged that his stand against the gay students Organization at the University of New Hampshire caused him to lose one job and be denied another. Alan Bridle, a former UNH trustee and student, now a teacher in Hampton, New Hampshire, made the charges in the November 22 issue of the *Manchester Union Leader*. Although Bridle blamed liberals, rather than gay people, for his employment difficulties, his charges came in the context of his "sensitivity" to Anita Bryant's "problems" with the Florida Citrus Commission. Bryant's contract was extended for another year and a half by the Florida Citrus Commission last week.

Bridle asserted in his *Union Leader* "commentary" that after he opposed the Gay Students Association's right to exist on campus, "I was told that my radio talk show, which had been broadcast for two years, would no longer need my services." At one point, he said, "I was informed by the Dean of Student Affairs it was not safe for me to stay in my college room, as a threat had been made on my well-being. I was under continuous attack by the college press."

After his graduation, Bridle was "assured" of a teaching job in a school district near his home, where he had already done some substitute teaching with good recommendation from the school principal. "Yet, when my name was brought up to the School Board, the principal was informed that my positions on the UNH Board of Trustees and my stand against the Gay Students Organization, made me an unsuitable candidate to be a teacher at that school."

"My relating the story to you now is to show that that element which uses threats and retaliation against those with whom they disagree also is here in New Hampshire," Bridle continued. "... I hope and pray for Miss Bryant. If the Florida Citrus Growers do not renew her contract then they prove they are spineless Americans..."

Although Bridle did not criticize gays specifically, a front-page editorial in the traditionally anti-gay *Union Leader* did not hesitate to do so. "Anyone who thinks the 'Gays' are just a harmless group of people 'doing their own thing' has another thing (sic) coming!" wrote publisher William Loeb. "Not only is their 'thing' an

abomination, according to the Bible, not only is it a disgrace to all mankind, but also it is a threat to the way of life of the rest of us."

"When someone such as Anita Bryant or Allen Bridle dares to come out against them, they pour forth their venom and do everything possible to interfere with the individual's success

and career.

"The tragedy of the situation is that much too much publicity has been granted these aberrations in human form by newspapers and other organizations."

"They should be banned from all respectable society..."

Spanish Communist Backs

'Affectional' Preferences

CAMBRIDGE, MA — Spanish Communist Party leader Santiago Carillo told a Harvard University audience last week that his party respects "affectional preferences" (*preferencias amorosas*) of all its members. "Each person in our party has their own literary, cultural, religious, and affectional preferences," Carillo told an overflow crowd at the university's Science Center. "These are private areas and no reason for the party to go into."

Carillo, the first leader of a Western European Communist Party to be granted a visa to visit the United States, made his remarks at the end of

a week of speaking at both Harvard and Yale. The party leader gained the ire of many on the American Left, however, when he walked through picket lines of striking service workers to speak at Yale University. Carillo, who spent 40 years both underground and in exile until the Community Party was legalized last year, now sits in the Spanish Parliament after his party won about 8% of the vote in the recent elections. He is one of the main architects of the "Eurocommunism" concept — a Western European Communism that both respects democratic traditions and is independent of the Soviet Union.

community voice

praise for pickett

Dear GCN:

As my half-year term as Political Action Committee chairperson of GAA comes to an end, I want to say a word of commendation for the "New York, New York" column by Harold Pickett.

Obviously, there can be no real gay community and no successful gay liberation movement without good, effective, fair and gay-controlled communication among gay people. Harold Pickett's column has provided this kind of communication for the gay people of the New York metropolitan area, and it has been a real service to the gay community here.

The work of gay movement organizations like GAA is made much easier when there are reporters like Harold Pickett and newspapers like GCN around. Thank you for what you have already done, and keep up the good work in the future.

Yours for Gay Power,

Joe Kennedy
Political Action Chairperson, GAA/NY

no planning part

Dear Neil:

The article of Anthony Domenick pertaining to the proposed Community Center contains an error in fact: The Unitarian Universalist Office of Gay Concerns has not been involved in planning for such a center. Several weeks ago, strictly for my own personal information, I attended one public meeting that had been announced by Mr. Bouchard. I have neither met with nor heard from Mr. Bouchard since then nor attended any further meetings. The inclusion of this office in this regard was without my knowledge or permission.

Sincerely yours,

Robert P. Wheatley
Director
Office of Gay Concerns

model homosexuals

Dear GCN:

... Slowly but surely the straight backlash is becoming evident and once it gets going, we won't be able to stop it. Life could very well be MORE difficult in the next few years than it was in the not-too-distant past and all because so many of our brothers and sisters can't see beyond their pathetic senses of humor. I agree heartily with Nancy Walker in her letter in Community Voices, 11/5/77. Some of the supposedly clever antics against people like Anita Bryant only manage to pull sympathy to them. Stop and think about the stereotypes of our lives — since the stereotypes of gay men are applied to all gay people, we are labeled "immature, shallow, a-moral."

I fail to see what is so mature, profound and moral about throwing pies in peoples' faces, or retaliating in such ways needless way. Like most of us, I have said that we should not have to live our lives trying to prove that we are what straight society calls "good," responsible," and "mature," that we should be able to live as individuals and be able to be treated as individuals, with our personal preferences, quirks, etc.

But our chance to carve out lives for ourselves on that pattern is gone. There were those of us too ready to abuse that opportunity, to destroy our own chance and the chances of others, by

providing our detractors with examples of every fault they love to credit us with. All our militancy and forthrightness got us *something* — laws were passed, new attitudes grew up, but where are they now? The laws are being repealed and the attitudes are sifting away. I'm afraid we're back to having to be "model homosexuals," my friends. It's our last chance. These people who are dead-set against us have to be combated, of course, but DISCREDIT, don't martyr them. Render Anita speechless by tripping her up in her own rhetoric.

When we've REALLY managed to change society's views on homosexuality then we'll be able to branch out and be ourselves. But if we insist on indulging ourselves now we'll soon find that the backlash has left us with nothing. Don't let the illusion of freedom fool you. Sure we have more than we've ever had before, but for how long?

Nan Hawthorne

shattered ears

Dear GCN,

My ears cry out to you! I simply cannot believe the prevalence of loud music in Boston's gay bars. It's not that I dislike disco, but I tire of leaving the nightspots with ringing ears (and double vision, I might add, due to the silly light shows!)

It seems strange to me that any meeting of people could occur under these circumstances! Or is this the politics of bars: one loses from the start — one is set up for it?

Please, is there any place in town that I can go where the music isn't ear shattering or must I just stand back and get blasted?

Sincerely,

Mark Dean



consumer's complaint

Dear GCN:

Has it ever occurred to the Gay Community that we as a group of consumers might need some special sort of special "consumer protection?" I admit, it had never occurred to me, until I happened to get ripped-off by two organiza-

tions which cater to the Gay Community. To indulge a prurient whim, my lover and I sent off two orders for "erotic literature" (which is to say porno) to two well-known commercial enterprises which specialize in that sort of thing, namely BLUEBOY MAGAZINE and BRENTWOOD. After a month, during which time both checks were cashed, I wrote a polite note to each place, inquiring as to the whereabouts of our orders. Silence. Two weeks later I repeated the inquiry, with a little less politesse. It has now been over two months since the orders were sent, and we have received nary a word in response, nor has the ordered merchandise arrived.

It is infuriating enough to get "ripped-off" by any mailorder house, and even more so to be rudely ignored by the personnel of that establishment. To get this sort of shoddy treatment from gay businesses which purport to be serving the Gay Community, and when the publisher of one (BLUEBOY) has boasted of his organization's virtues on national television (Phil Donahue, Chicago), is both infuriating and insulting.

At least, with a little publicity, perhaps BLUEBOY and BRENTWOOD will adopt more courteous and honest practices, once they know that not all their customers are nervous professional types from Belair or Coconut Grove who won't make any noise for the sake of privacy. If GCN would send each place a complimentary copy of the issue this letter appears in, it might wake up a few fellas in the sunny cities.

Sincerely,

U. G. Dietz

Talking Politics

by David Brill

Barney Frank and Jack Backman recently announced that they would not support Michael Dukakis for reelection as governor in 1978. This announcement, coming as it did from two of the Duke's earliest supporters, was but one manifestation of the substantial erosion of support that Dukakis has incurred.

Maybe it was something in the stars, or perhaps even the drinking water, which, in 1974, caused the voters to misperceive so many candidates. It isn't only Dukakis. Frank Bellotti, for example, had 49% of the state vote against him, but now is one of the most popular politicians in the state.

On September 10, 1974, I was standing a few feet away from Michael Dukakis in the grand ballroom of Boston's 57 Restaurant after he had just defeated Robert Quinn for the Democratic nomination. With glee, he shouted, "I will not let you down."

Hey, Governor, guess what: You let us down.

What should gay people have expected from Dukakis? To answer that question, it is necessary to look at the records of governors of two other states: Pennsylvania's Milton Shapp issued an executive order banning discrimination in state employment, Jerry

Brown has ordered homophobia screening in state employment in California, and tepidly opposed the now-withdrawn Briggs initiative to ban gay teachers. Each of them has official contacts in the gay community, while Shapp has established a Governor's Commission on Sexual Minorities.

The Dukakis record is at best one of inaction. As chairperson of the Democratic National Committee's Platform Policy Committee in 1976, Dukakis was in an ideal position to push for a gay rights plank, but instead, he succumbed to pressure not to from the Carter forces. Despite considerable campaign rhetoric about support for "affirmative action," he failed to appoint a single lesbian to the 27-member Governor's Commission on the Status of Women. (Even Frank Sargent appointed Elaine Noble!) There has been no executive order from Dukakis, and, in fact, he announced at a Governor's Town Meeting in western Massachusetts last October that he supported the Equal Rights Amendment because he was sure that it would not allow homosexual marriages, which he opposed.

We expected more from Dukakis, and rightly so. There should be a gay liaison in the governor's office, and there should have been strong pro-gay statements this year during the homophobia hysteria nurtured by Anita Bry-

ant and Sen. David Locke of Wellesley.

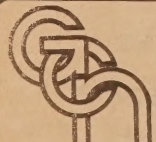
However, the governor's record is not all bleak. He did, it should be noted, write letters to legislative committee chairmen stating that he supported the gay rights bills. To his credit, he vetoed the Flynn-Doyle anti-abortion bill. And certainly, Margaret Burnham will be a lot more sensitive to gay concerns at Boston Municipal Court than Joe DeGuglielmo.

But perhaps the single best contribution Dukakis has made has been the appointment of good people. By naming former Rep. Larry Buxbaum of Sharon to the post of Assistant Secretary of Consumer Affairs, former Rep. Dennis Kearney of Charlestown as Sheriff of Suffolk County, and former Civil Liberties Union lobbyist Joan Tuttle as Assistant Secretary of Environmental Affairs, Dukakis has made a number of state agencies more responsive to gay interests. (Tuttle deserves special recognition in this vein, as she has worked to end MDC police harassment of gay men in cruising areas.)

But still, there is something inhumane, if not inhuman, about a governor that would find money to build a road for Digital Electronics, while at the same time taking away medical assistance for welfare recipients. In Congress (The Hyde Amendment) and

Continued on page 5

gcn contributors



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Second-class postage paid at Boston, Mass. Annual subscription rate is \$15.00.

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NEWS EDITOR

GCN is looking for a full-time news editor. Journalistic experience, knowledge of gay politics necessary. \$70 a week salary. Anyone interested should call Neil at 426-4469.

INFORMATION WANTED

GCN has heard reports of people who claim to have been beaten up by a gang of 2 to 10 men, both in Park Square and the Fenway areas. Anyone with specific information on these incidents is urged to call David Brill at 426-4469.

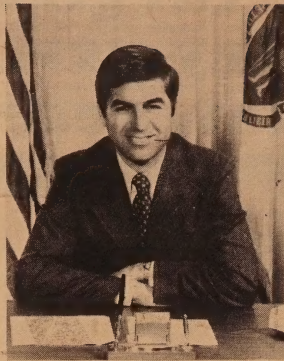
Talking Politics

Continued from page 4

in the legislature (The Flynn-Doyle bill), we have seen the real battle lines are drawn between the haves and the have-nots. If you could draw an imaginary line through the State House, and put business, industry, and the anti-gay, anti-abortion forces on one side, and the pro-human rights, pro-justice forces on the other, Dukakis would have trouble deciding where to stand. And that's not good.

But back to Barney and Jack. Jack, for the record, said he's not sure any one candidate would interest him at this time, and says he just may "sit out" next year's election. Barney is thinking of several candidates, including former House Speaker David Bartley of Holyoke. (Frank has even been pondering the team of Middlesex County Sheriff John Buckley and Rep. Barbara Gray of Framingham — Republicans!)

But if Dukakis is bad, what about the other choices? Bartley would have signed the Flynn-Doyle bill, the death penalty bill, and has the motivation to make Robert Quinn a judge. Senate President Kevin Harrington, for all his brilliance, would make the governor's office a surrogate utility company. Former Massport head Ed King would take a bulldozer to the Back Bay if some manufacturer wanted to build a factory.



Governor Michael Dukakis

The only decent alternatives — if one needs to find one — are on the Republican side. Rep. Frank Hatch of Beverly is a reliable gay rights supporter with a long record of decency as a legislator. And Middlesex County Sheriff John Buckley would be innovative and desirable, but neither he nor Hatch appears about to beat Dukakis.

So maybe Jack Backman is right in sitting out the 1978 governor's race. The present incumbent is certainly not the type of candidate to whom I would

give a vote with the same enthusiasm next year as in 1974, but by the same token, the alternatives are equally non-plussing. Well, sure, given the rightward tide of politics these days, we could do worse than Mike Dukakis. But not much.

Barney, though, defended Harrington in a recent interview. Citing the Senate President's long history of sup-

port for funding for social welfare and prison reform, he called Harrington's liberal record "a quiet one" and predicted that, as governor, Harrington "would do no less for gay rights than Dukakis." (Barney noted that a gay rights bill passed the Senate this year, and that "if Harrington didn't want it, it wouldn't have passed.")

Youth Remanded in Shooting

MIAMI, Fla. — A young man who shot a Miami gay bartender with a BB gun outside a gay dance here has been remanded to custody of the Youth Services Division with a suspended sentence. The judge in the case, Justice Seymour Gelber, also ordered that full restitution be made to the victim and that a follow-up report be made in 60 days and every 60 days thereafter.

The youth had pleaded no contest to charges of aggravated battery and use of a weapon in the BB gun shooting of John Ward last June 27. Ward suffered a collapsed lung after he was shot while waiting for a taxi in Coconut Grove.

The judge's decision came after the defense had introduced three football coaches as witnesses in an attempt to persuade the court that an athletic program would be sufficient means of rehabilitation for the youth.

However, Justice Gelber refused to

accept defense arguments and asserted, "I don't believe for one minute that the athletic program at Coral Gables High School, as good as it is, has the kind of impact that we are talking about here, as it relates to how people treat one another. This case is one of the most distressing ones I've had before me and I'm not prepared to view this as an ordinary situation. The community suffered terrible damage here as a result of this, and I want the community to know that we are not going to tolerate this kind of behavior."

Court appointed youth counselor Jose Osario had recommended to the court that the youth be committed to youth service programs and suspended sentencing as long as the defendant agreed to psychotherapy, family counseling, school programs, and restitution to the victim.

The Dade County Gay Coalition praised the judge's decision and expressed their approval that he "treated this case as a very serious matter." In the courtroom, John Ward, victim of the attack, said that "I would like to see the young man work with physically or mentally handicapped persons for a couple of years to make him more aware of what life is really about."

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— Joseph Cain, In Touch

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By Harold Pickett

By Harold Pickett

NEW YORK — Under the Freedom of Information Act, the **Gay Activists Alliance** has received a reply to an appeal it filed earlier this year with the Department of Justice. The appeal resulted from the "insufficient" material previously received when GAA requested its FBI files. At that time, only a few pages of material was sent. Now, it's reported that an additional 86 pages will be released. Art Gursch, secretary of GAA, says that the only materials still to be withheld or deleted are those which "consist of names of special agents and materials referring to third parties and bureau sources." Gursch feels that even this decision may be appealed if a precedent can be found which would enable GAA to get a court order for the release of the names of agents.

Monday, Nov. 28, at 7:30 p.m., is the next meeting of the **Men's Center**, a group composed of men with varying sexual orientations who are exploring consciousness and personal liberation in a loving and non-sexist environment. They have a new meeting place at Washington Square Methodist Church parish house, one flight up, at 133 W. 4th St., between 6th and MacDougal. Future meetings will be on each Monday after that.

The Soho News, a weekly city paper, is one of the most enjoyable and least homophobic publications that I read, with the exception of **Bob Weiner's** column. Weiner tries for some imagined self-importance and has for a few weeks been attempting to carry on a one-sided feud with the *Voice's* gay

columnist, **Arthur Bell**. As **David Rothenberg** noted in a recent issue of *Gaysweek*, Weiner often stoops to homophobic, personal attacks on Bell. Weiner sounds to me either like a jilted ex-lover or one who's personally jealous of Bell's self-acceptance and public success as an open gay.

Aside from Weiner, the paper has good coverage of gay news and appropriate references. In a recent issue, **Larry Lopez**, writing in the "Albany Circus" column, brought Governor

Carey to task for neglecting to support gay rights.

Lopez writes "Despite a campaign promise to support equal rights for homosexuals, Hugh Carey has cut the budget of the state's staunchest gay rights advocate and steadfastly refused to put his name on gay legislation.

"And according to gay and straight activists, the governor has even refused to answer their letters or to turn the letters over to someone else for a response, his usual practice."

Lopez continues "For one thing, Carey has twice rejected Human Rights Commissioner Werner Kramarsky's plea to make gay rights a part of his legislative program and is about to reject it a third time."

The article concluded with an appropriate quote by Albany gay lobbyist **John Nehrich** who feels it will be necessary for gays to start bloc voting on a one-issue basis. "After all," Nehrich stated, "the voting booth is one of the best closets there is."

Houston Conference Backs Lesbian Rights

Continued from page 1

varied widely throughout the weekend. The "Pro-Family Coalition" ran a half-page ad in Houston newspapers showing a little girl holding a bouquet of flowers, asking, "Mommy, when I grow up, can I be a lesbian?" On the other hand, many were touched by the sight of a woman and her child holding a poster that read, "LesbianMothers are Pro-Family."

Anita Bryant, who did not attend, said that she believed that the IWY conference was a farce, and that most American women would not favor a resolution supporting lesbianism. She also criticized the government funding of the conference.

The spearhead of anti-feminism, Phyllis Schlafly, stated before the weekend that the conference would be "the death knell of the women's liberation movement." But, according to the perceptions of most women there, this



was not the case, and if the women's movement was ringing any bells, they were bells of triumph.

Neither Congress nor the President are obligated to act on any of the resolutions, and many of those who at-

tended realized that this conference was not an end in itself, but a major step in the course of a long battle. As Bella Abzug put it, "We are here running for equality. We'll never run for cover on this journey."

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Harry Allard writes stories for children. His latest is *It's So Nice To Have A Wolf Around The House* (Double-day), illustrated by James Marshall.

Wolf is Allard's 6th book published in the last four years. As a relative newcomer to children's books, Allard has drawn attention and an audience.

"This year has been a very good year for me," he said. "The tree has just blossomed. *Miss Nelson Is Missing* came out in April and has sold over 15,000 copies. *Crash Helmet* came out in May. And *Wolf* in September." *Miss Nelson*, like *Wolf*, is illustrated by the prolific and talented James Marshall. *Crash Helmet* has illustrations by the Egyptian-American artist, Jean-Claude Soares, whose pen-and-ink drawings are often seen on the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times*.

Speaking of *The Times*, two of Allard's recent books were favorably reviewed in consecutive issues of *The Times Book Supplement*.

"A *Times* review is good for one's ego, but actually there are two better reviews in *School Library Journal* and *American Library Association*. Starred reviews. That means that, like zombies, librarians go out and buy it. *The Social Library Journal* can make or break a book no matter what *The Times* thinks."

Harry Allard was in his mid-40's before he started writing children's books. It was through his friendship with Jim Marshall that his first book developed, *The Stupids Step Out* (GCN 7/20/74). "James is tremendous both as an illustrator and as a writer. It

was my great break to begin with him. I think we share a sense of humor. He always knows what I'm doing. We complement each other." Marshall, a writer/illustrator of staggering productivity and imagination, has over a dozen titles in print. His most recent is *A Summer In The South*.

Harry was born in Chicago in 1928 and grew up there during the Depression. His father ran a music school—"it was phoney"—that was, at best, marginal. His was not the ideal childhood. "It's hard for me to remember the Depression. It just seems grey. I've just blotted it out of my mind. I did go to the movies every Saturday with my sister. It cost a quarter. Movies were the only things that kept people alive. I remember being the fall guy for the family, having to take the rent down to the ogress of a landlady so that my parents wouldn't have to face her. I had a little dog, a Boston terrier named Sally. I think everyone who's gay has had the same kind of life. You live in your own dream world. I think growing up gay provides a very fertile ground for imaginative efforts. For example, I made puppets and had puppet shows. The gay temperament is very introspective. I think gay people ask questions much earlier than other people—metaphysical questions. Almost always your parents are at each other's throat. Mine were. You learn to question everything. The normal temperament asks 'How?'—How am I going to get a better car, a better job? And the philosophical temperament asks 'Why?' I ask: 'Why get a better job?'"

After school his first job was working in the offices of Kraft Cheese—filing. "I couldn't even do the filing. It wasn't that I didn't know the alphabet. I seemed to antagonize people by my very existence. You know that lower-middle-class mentality. The office people there were like dogs smelling each others' behinds. It makes me think of when Yul Brynner fled France in 1940. Jean Cocteau, whose finances were at nap time then, told him: 'Yul, I'd like to give you a going-away present, but I just don't have any money. But I'll give you a piece of advice that's worth more than anything else in the world: Never deal with fools!'"

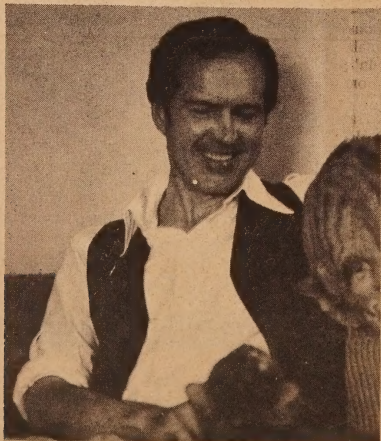
One way out of Chicago (and Kraft Cheese) was the Army. Harry was drafted in 1950. He served on the front lines in the Korean War in a communications outpost. He used the time to read Proust from A to Z. After his discharge, he went to Paris. "I meant to stay a year. I stayed three years and then went back for another year. I'd love to live in France again, but it becomes less and less possible to rearrange one's life. The two cities I like best are Paris and San Antonio. Sounds strange, but San Antonio is a lovely city, completely Mexican. It's a lotus-land, people sitting by swimming pools with a glass of gin and tonic for the next 35 years. But, if I could do it, I'd live in the south of France, where all those prehistoric cave paintings are near the Spanish border."

In Paris, Allard supported himself teaching at Berlitz. During his years

Harry Allard of Children Talks About



Harry Allard and his cats.



"Time to get ready for bed," said Mrs. Stupid. The Stupids put on their sleeping clothes. "Don't we look handsome," said Mr. Stupid

From *The Stupids Step Out*, Artwork by James Marshall

there, he had several interviews with Jean Cocteau. Allard's American roommate was doing his doctorate on American plays performed in Europe. Cocteau translated Williams' *Streetcar Named Desire*. Since Allard's roommate spoke no French, Harry agreed to go along as translator. "So we went to meet Cocteau at the Palais Royal where he lived. Cocteau was in his white terry-cloth bathrobe, scratching his balls, surrounded by journalists. Just a carnival. All these interviews going on. He had become like the Eiffel Tower. He said to us: 'We really can't talk here.' So we went to a huge 5-story house and the butler let us in. We talked there. Cocteau never answered anybody's questions. He'd say things like: 'I know I'll never live long enough to see the de-gravitation of the earth.' Apparently he had some news that there was this scientific breakthrough that the earth was going to be de-gravitated. Then he gave me some drawings. That was nice. And now he's gone."

His Paris days over, Allard returned to Chicago in the mid-'50's. "I was 27, a little old for graduate school. There was really nothing I could do." The only marketable skill he had developed

was teaching French. He finally got a job as a language instructor. "I wouldn't have got the job if a French teacher hadn't dropped dead of a heart attack in the library. That was my big break. So I went to Wisconsin to teach."

Allard continued his own education at a series of schools, while teaching, until he finally earned his Ph.D. from Yale a few years ago. "Wherever you taught, you were always at the bottom of the totempole if you didn't have a doctorate. So I went to Yale and got my fancy doctorate. I thought I could write my own ticket at last. But that was just at the time everything folded up for language teachers." He's currently teaching French at Salem State College and has tenure there.

Harry Allard is a romantic. There is a quality of belief in things magical in his conversation and certainly in his work. He lights up with an appreciation at wonderful things, a rare quality in a middle-aged man. His conversation sparkles with delightful non-sequiters. His politics, such as they are, are monarchical, but of the simplistic movie-tone *Prisoner of Zenda*-type. "Governments are, by definition, a mess. Let them at least be glamorous."

ry
allard
de
font
colum
A drawing
from Mr.
to Mr. Al
fitean
(1961)

S'irani Avedis—A Fiery Sign

By Sara Annie Fisher

The music of S'irani Avedis (formerly Sally Piano) is anguished, punky, and politically weighty. Her musical artistry reaches some exquisite peaks. S'irani's politics are expressed with both rigidity and ribaldry. The political thrust of her performance in Harvard's Paine Hall on Saturday evening, November 19th was unsettling and harsh for me. It often took the form of forcible expression. She made her statements in an unclear and often flippant, sensationalized way.

S'irani decried the "star mystique" which causes remoteness between audience and performer, and which withholds emotion and personal involvement. But I found it damaging for her to raise so many critical issues without being responsible enough to explain her positions thoroughly. I felt she goaded us into seeing issues which she herself did not understand.

She speaks of how all people are trampled upon in this polluted world, how we all suffer from invalidation and oppression. Yet I found rampant inconsistencies in her political concerns. After sensationalizing a non-representative letter from a transsexual who spoke of "the inferiority of genetic women," she belabored this issue to the point of cruelty. She then sang how "there ain't no copy good enough" to be a true woman. Learning might have transpired through listening to another's beliefs. Instead, S'irani badgered the audience with her ire and ridicule, and her intent was lost to me, as was any deepened understanding.

She taught some Armenian history,



tage. She has changed her name from Sally Piano to S'irani Avedis. S'irani (tsee/rrah/nee) means rainbow, and Avedis (ah/veh/dees) means "the bringer of messages." She is secure in her heritage, and this shows strongly in her song *Rainbow Woman*. She does not acknowledge the term or the concept of "Third World" because she believes it is politically and economically misleading as a category. She describes racism and sexism as when an individual is "being raised to be no more than an ornamental slave." She sang with such anger and pride. I wished for greater sensitivity and more respectful handling of other issues.

"I hate you for betraying yourself" was her address to those "zombie creatures," women office workers. S'irani wrote this song while gazing around at women on the early morning bus as she travelled to her Kelly Girl assignment.

"Everyday it gets easier to forget womankindness as you forsake womankind."

Few women office workers possess the "\$500 outfits" which she detailed. These women have valid skills and

work as secretaries does not mean we have become robotized and indifferent, it does not signify betrayal or abandonment of ourselves or other women. Choice and circumstances are at the core, which she dismisses as she sings cleverly of fashions and loss of will. If the focus of S'irani's music is oppression in a devastating society, then she must look at its entirety.

S'irani Avedis is a compelling musician when she is clear about the political content of her songs, and when she does not knuckle under to endless self-deprecation and defense. In her introduction to one song she said, "Solidarity and growth are important to me." Her songs stress these elements so vital to her life. S'irani sings a spectrum, from raging a capella about being "just a punk child brat gone wild" to crooning a gentle and pained love song, *In the Morning Sun*. Her piano, song, and voice synchronize beautifully. In *California Mood* she laments the climate there, while desolate droplets of rain plink on the piano. She is an artist dancing with her instruments.

"We're a rising nation
We're a balloon inside

We're coming out singing
for the first time."

This song began the second set with a much-needed buoyancy, and was played with a rousing piano style, congruous with the "fiery sign" explosive nature of the lyrics. *Funky Fine Fucker*, a kind of "lesbian propaganda" tune advising all cheerleaders that "it's fun to be a lesbian" and that "you'd be better off with your best friend," was pounded out in S'irani's particularly bawdy fashion.

One of the most stirring songs was about physical disability and the psychological torment of disease, dedicated to a 22 year-old friend with kidney disease.

"Don't need an athlete to make an Amazon
Don't need legs to be tall enough to stand
Don't need sight to see the possibilities."

Singing of several women who are "warriors in this great revolution/ and every war has got its casualties," she does not speak of resignation, but of hopefulness and stamina. S'irani accompanied her song with graceful signing as she spoke of Renee, a deaf woman "born into silence."

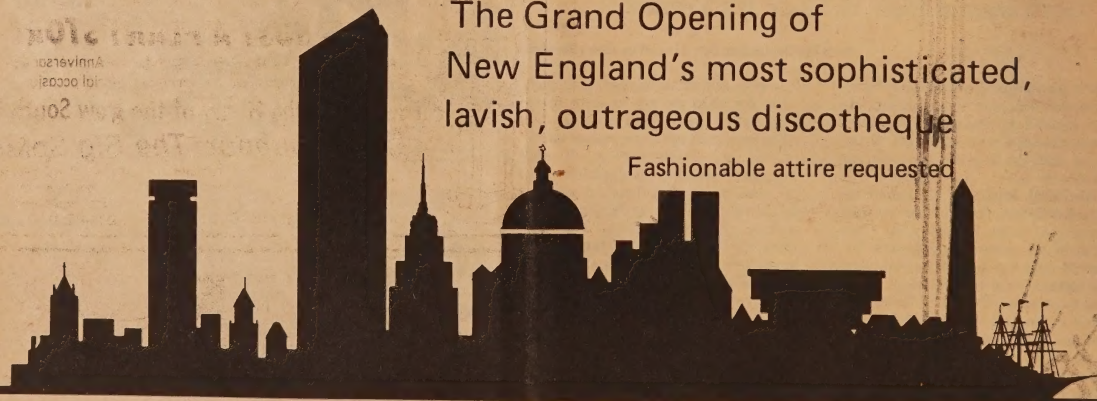
"Born a woman with hope inside her heart
No disease will keep her in a cage."

S'irani Avedis is an artist with much exuberance, often healthy animosity, very moving vulnerability, and many voices. Her concert was erratic, complex and whirling with her piano prowess. "She's a crazy lady; a bright design," and I wish her the clearness of spring water.

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Role of Oscar Wilde Brought to Life

DIVERSION & DELIGHTS, a play with Vincent Price as Oscar Wilde, is written by John Gay and directed by Joseph Hardy. It will be at Boston's Colonial Theatre through December 10.

A review by Jim Marko

Oscar Wilde is egocentric, self-centered, grand, overly mannered, fey, bitchy, vengeful, self-pitying, caustic, wildly sexist, haughty, amoral, vain, angry, sad, near death, a drunkard, "the spendrift of his own genius," and, as performed by Vincent Price, a joy to hear and watch.

Diversions & Delights by John Gay is set in a tacky concert hall in Paris on the 28th day of November, 1899. It is the last year of Wilde's life and he is suffering from an infection of the inner ear which becomes more painful during the course of the evening.

Strutting on stage with absinthe in hand, Price as Wilde begins an immediate assault on just about everybody and everything. The observations tumble out of his pursed lips, bump into *bon mots* and fall over aphorisms—all delivered in a caustic and studied indifference.

Even those of us who have always found Oscar Wilde to have been little more than a clever writer of grand epigrams, are easily entertained and touched by Price's convincing performance. He becomes tiresome and overbearing on countless occasions during the evening. Those eyebrows arch once too often and the eye balls roll one time too many. But this is the

Wilde one expected and has come to the theater to see.

There are no secrets in this night's diversion at the concert hall on the Rue de la Pepinier, Paris. It is the "touching scandal of this wicked flesh." With the constricted voice of one who views life as debauch and has spent two years in prison, Price's Wilde attacks Americans, the English, politicians, liars, critics, actors, audiences, theater managers, priests, and the church. The most vicious volleys are saved for the moralists of society. "Morality is the attitude we adopt toward the people we dislike." This question of morality is central to John Gay's witty, humorous and razor-edged script.

Increasingly drunk on his beloved absinthe, Price as Wilde is superb in the evening's second act. It deals, primarily, with the unbelievably idiotic trial and imprisonment of the young playwright. Wilde was accused by the Marquis of Queensbury of "posing as a sodomite"—the Marquis could not even spell the word. The snobbish Wilde decided to bring a slander suit, no doubt inspired more by his *grande passion* for the Marquis' son Lord Alfred than by any reasonable reaction to the insult.

Price shows us an intense, angry and embittered Wilde who relates details of the horrid trial and subsequent jailing. Contemptuous and betrayed, this stumbling, doomed character is reduced to one of the evening's sadder observations: "Only those we love betray us." Self-indulgent and ever more self-pitying, Price's Wilde lurches



Vincent Price as Oscar Wilde in *Diversions & Delights*. The play is a humorous yet touching account of Wilde's last year of life.

about the small stage in fits of anger mixed with fits of melancholy for his "Bosie." It is a disconsolate moment for Oscar Wilde but a grand theater moment for Vincent Price.

"What is the difference between one sexual activity and another?" asks Wilde. What will endear this fop who suggests that there is no new emotion for him to feel and who cannot "abide" a man without a single vice? What will endear him to us, in Price's performance, are the feelings concerning that "love that dares not speak its name"—the euphemism the court gave to Wilde's homosexuality. "It is an affection as pure as it is perfect," Price cries indignantly. "It is a misunderstood emotion—a love beyond rival." It is a love that died only of mendacity and for the lack of truthfulness. Price is alternately lost in the reverie and the hatred in the scene that intersperses bits of *Reading Gaol* with other observations of Wilde's beautiful and somber experience with the young Lord Alfred.

An earlier joy concludes the first of the two act evening of *Diversions & Delights*. A quieted, seated Wilde describes a friendship with a young fellow student just before college days. He thinks now of the boy as a "mute poet" but was not able to notice the nearly overburdening love his friend was bestowing upon him. As they parted, the student kissed him on the lips. "I felt the boy's cold tears on my face. I know what love is now."

Oscar Wilde is purported to have told Andre Gide that he had put his genius into his life, and only his talent into his writings. *Diversions & Delights* is an evening filled with the talented and combined genius of Vincent Price, John Gay and Oscar O'Flahertie Wilds Wilde.

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Rousing Musical Tells Story of Working Women

THE FURIES OF MOTHER JONES, a musical play written and directed by Maxine Klein, is being performed by the Little Flags Theatre through December 17 (on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights) at the Peoples Theatre, Inman Square, Cambridge.

By Jim Marko

When Mary Harris "Mother" Jones died in 1930 at the age of 100, she left behind a story rich in struggle and resistance. With a dozen songs celebrating the culture of Appalachian coal miners, Maxine Klein presents a play dedicated to this woman who was active in almost every movement for justice and workers' rights.

Klein asks us to become acquainted with Mother Jones' Union and to "maybe join it." For all of the first of the two acts, you might just do that.

Jumping narratively from the recent coal miners' union battle between Joseph Yablonski and Tony Boyle to an individual's fight against strip mining to events in the past history of the long unionization struggle, *Furies* paints a fine, tightly-wrought and fairly non-didactic picture of an exploited working class. The play works amazingly well on Michael Anania's easily adaptable set.

The rousing music, with a fine score by James Oestereich, is a great compliment to the poetry of *Furies*. When the cast sings "Gotta Organize," the play turns into a stand-up, clap-your-hands



Singing songs of the labor struggle: Peggy Ings, Ellen Field (as Mother Jones), Andrea Saragov and Anita Barzman.

revival meeting that is very contagious. "Nothing to Rest My Eyes Against!" is an honestly heart-tugging song by the women who are central to this play.

Furies is a continuation of the politically aware work of Maxine Klein. She and her Little Flags Theatre have given us *Fanshen* and *Tania* in the past, in which the mix of politics and theatre worked well. An aware and committed person, Klein presents a natural and warm view of a homosexual relationship in her newest piece. The situation is so easily a part of the complete play that one looks forward to a large scale effort on Klein's part in pre-

sending a gay relationship on stage.

This work has a thoroughly involved, exciting, neat and intense ensemble of players. I was especially impressed by the naturalistic performances of Anita Barzman and Davis Bates. Watch for Andrea Saragov's moving work in the final scene of Act One, in which she is dragged off the land she has been trying to hold on to in the face of the "progress" of strip mining. It is in that brief and wildly intense moment that the legacy, indeed the fury, of Mother Jones lives on.

But as Mother herself might point out, when you fight one battle, you know there are more. Maxine Klein loses one in her second act. The play,

(continued on next page)

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people, places and flings

By Eric Rogers

Finish off the Thanksgiving leftovers and get ready for an exciting holiday season. While most gay organizations and bars wait until mid-December for their holiday parties, nightlife in Boston usually brightens at the start of the month. This year is no different. **Linda Gerard**, who has been packing in full-houses at the **Pied Piper** in Provincetown for the past three summers, is bringing her act to the **Copley Plaza** on December 8th. Boston gays may remember Linda's entertainment at the Gay Pride March in June and since that time she has worked up a show that should bring the same standing ovations that she received on the Cape. I'm told Linda's act includes songs from many genres—show tunes, the blues, country ballads—as well as the tall tales, giggles and joking that Linda delivers with her special charm. Tickets for "An Evening with Linda Gerard," (cocktails in the Venetian Room at 6:30, cabaret in the Oval Room at 7:30) are available at the **Copley Plaza** . . . The new manager at the Community Club is Nancy Ryan. She's planning some really great parties upstairs and I hear drink prices are going down to stay. She'd love to have everyone stop in and say hello.

At **Passim**, behind the Coop in Harvard Square, **Allen Ginsberg** and friends will be reading poetry and performing their wild antics on Thursday, December 1 through Sunday, December 4. **Allen's** shows sell out quickly, so be sure to pick up tickets in advance . . . Happy 20th Birthday to **Sporter's**! The December 1st Celebration promises an afternoon buffet, Cocktail

prices from 1957 until 8pm, a midnight dinner, a prize for the best 50's attire. Be sure to stop in and wish **Jack Rubin's** place a happy birthday!

From up north in ski-country, I've received word that **Jimmy Mitchell's Mountain Lodge** has completed the move to bigger and better facilities on Mt. Ascutney in Vermont. The new lodge features a pool, nine-hole golf course, and a breathtaking view. Now is the time to start planning a romantic ski-trip to **Jimmy's** place . . . Don't miss "An Evening with the Stars" on Wednesday night, November 30, at the **Citadel**. The show features three of our favorites—**Sylvia Sydney**, **Collette**, and **Carl Houston**—together for the first time. The show starts at 10 PM and it sounds like a perfect way to escape the midweek doldrums . . . **Harriet Leider** will be back at **Somewhere** on Saturday, December 3 and Sunday, December 4. . .

Craig Russell's Outrageous soundtrack is finally out on an album but hurry—it's selling out fast all over town. Don't miss the opportunity to bring the "many faces of Craig" into your home . . . add to that, the **Orson Welles Cinema** is now naming **Outrageous** the most popular film ever in the history of the **Welles**. . . **A Special Day**, an Italian film starring **Sophia Loren** and **Marcello Mastroianni**, is coming to Boston. The movie focuses on a brief encounter between a working-class housewife and an out-of-work homosexual man in a tenement in fascist Italy. It's a different setting from **Romeo & Juliet's Verona**, but it's an interesting and sensitive movie about two people drawn together by

their needs . . . While we're on the subject, **Leah Fritz** will be discussing "Feminism vs Fascism" for the Community Church of Boston on Nov. 27 at 11 a.m., in Morse Auditorium, 602 Commonwealth Avenue. **Joanna Cazden** will be on hand providing music . . . The new **Mouth of the Dragon**, an anthology of poetry by gay writers, is out and includes a short, erotic poem by **Jim Marko**, who contributes to GCN.

Now's the time to begin your holiday shopping and you might want to begin at **Copley Flair** at 583 Boylston St. Besides their collection of soaps and gourmet jelly beans, they carry some of the best cards in town, including a selection from Birthday Book Greetings—my favorite—from NYC . . . The **Cyclorama Flea Market and Antiques Christmas Fair** will be taking place Sun. Dec. 4. There will be something for everyone. Truly a one-stop Christ-

mas shopping opportunity, and for those special handcrafted items you'd been searching for try **Christmas Secrets** located in the Cylorama building open thru Dec. 24, 10-6 Sat.-Thurs. and 10-8 Fridays.

The **Eagle Annex** is open at 81 Kilnrock St. in the Fenway. The front part of the store offers lush green plants and a pet shop, and the back room is the L & L shop with a Christmas stock of leather toys and erotic accoutrements. Stop in on your way to the **Eagle**—the shop's open until 2a.m. . . . Over in Inman Square, Cambridge, check out **Gypsy Wagon**, 204 Hampshire St., a store with handcrafted jewelry, gifts, and unusual clothing from all over the world. I dropped by and found myself a big, snugly-warm sweater to get me through the winter.

Until next week, snuggle up and enjoy the onslaught of December.

Politics and theatre

(Continued from previous page)

which up to this point delicately walks the line between committed and strident political theatre, falls into the murky realm of moral teaching. Nearly all of the act could be pruned and a new ending devised.

It is not only the theatre-as-hand-bill feeling that goes wrong here, but one tends to finally settle into the figure of Mother Jones. Ellen Field, with her slight smirk, her twinkly eye, and jaunty moves has one fooled for most

of Act One. You believe this matronly women may have been the "hell-cat organizer" she claims to be—but, no. Watch closely and Field is giving us nothing more than caricature. It is one's own memories and knowledge of Mother Jones that fix her in place.

Ignore the black-clad figure of Mother, if you can, and settle on her Furies. Settle on those strong and powerful women behind the over-worked coal miners. The picture of angry, hang-tough, working-class women proves that it has been "a long hard struggle for labor and women." The legacy of Mother Jones lives on in the continuing struggle personified by these women. The play is a celebration of "herstory."

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MOUSIE, MOUSIE, P. D.

Saw note in account bk today. Wish I had seen it yesterday. Olla kaka. Mia zoe. etc. S'agapo, kseuris? All my love. Porcupine. GWM 25 would like to meet gay men bet 20-30 who are into WWS and light S&M. Please send photo & phone to VR, Suite 746, 102 Charles St., Boston, MA 02114. (22+)

BARBARA G.

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ATTENTION "SENIOR IN YEARS"

If the gentleman who wrote in August asking about correspondents will tell me how to get in touch with him and forward his mail, I will gladly run his penpal ad. Write Nancy, GCM Classifieds, 22 Bromfield St., Boston, MA 02108. (24)

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TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Please Print Neatly.

Mixed group seeks 4th for spacious Newton house-apt; shared meals and chores; fireplace, piano, good people, car needed. \$94+. Call 965-3998. (23)

Hil I need a mmate. GF seeks GF or GM to share lg 6 rm apt, Beacon Hill. Use of space must be friendly, resp and clean. \$151. 742-0785 after 5. (22+)

Need 1 GF to share 4 bdrm Camb duplex for 1/78. Conv to trans and stores. We are into photog and feminism. Rent is 106 per mo + elec. Call 354-7662 evns. (23)

2 fags in collective house skg 3rd person who is congenial, independent and willing to grow with us thru the winter. Roxbury location, low rent. Conv to public trans. John or Bruce 427-2778. (22+)

M or F roommate wanted to share W. Somerville apt w/GF and GM. \$87.50 + utilities. Nonsmoker plz. Call 628-9215. Available Jan. 1. (25)

We are 5 diverse GM living in a 12 rm hse we own in Medford. Looking for 1 more nonsmoker, half hr. dwntwn Boston by MBTA. 396-7836. (23)

job op

MASSEURS will train. 267-7590. (22)

WANT A REAL CHALLENGE? Be a force in the community—GCM seeks a NEWS EDITOR. Call Harry or Tony at 426-4469 or send resume to GCM, 22 Bromfield St., Boston, MA 02108. (c)

Hotline Co-ordinator. Full time job. Supervise and train volunteer s.

Experienced in crisis intervention, administration and training required. Relocation to lower Cape necessary. \$9,600. Drop in. Send resume to Provincetown Provincetown Ctr., 6 Gosnold St., Provincetown, MA 02657. Send resume by Dec. 7. (22)

Press operator, experienced & dependable, with some camera skills. Full-time position in a gay-owned business doing offset printing and graphic arts photography. Initiative and problem solving ability a must; gender and orientation are unimportant. Call Manager, Xanadu Printing, 661-6975.

COMPANION TO FLY TO TUCCSON FOR WINTER

All expenses paid no swishes man very straight acting no beads or long hair good looking 21 to 28 yrs old. Share cooking and cleaning apt. there. Man is very conscientious \$100 per week plus all expenses. Call 1-401-640-1002. (23)

GWM horticulturist seeks mature GM as helper or apprentice to share simple life near ocean on small island. Photo please. Write John, Box 588, Edgartown, MA 02539. (22)

APPRENTICE +

Did you begin to read at about age 5? Can you use the English language well, spell, type? Are you mentally & manually dexterous? We seek male companion/best friendlover who is, together, a hard worker, quick learner, who will live with me, sharing joy and contentment. In return I will teach you a trade which will support you comfortably the rest of your life. Located Greater Boston. Write fully about yourself, pic helps. GCM Box 69.

Experienced keypunchers needed for volunteer work on sexuality survey. Contact Don Barrett at Box 761.

wanted

GCM is always in need of office furniture, paint, sofa, file cabinets, shelves and anything else in is good repair for our office. To donate contact Tony at 426-4469. (c)

We need a driver with a van or truck to donate time & truck (we'll pay gas) to help pick up donations for GCM. Call Tony at 426-4469. (c)

misc

ANIMAL FARE
Science diet Eukanuba Kibble Bench and Field Litter, Grain, Pet Accessories. Free delivery north of Boston. Call (617) 646-6581 evns. 723-2669 days. (23)

BACK IN STOCK
Iron-On Lambda transfers, great looking, 1 1/2 in. bold orange, 60¢ ea., 2/51.00. GREEK GRAPHICS, POB 152, Sauquoit, NY 13456. Dealer inquiries welcome. (20+)

job wanted

GAYS AND MUSIC
Bassist/vocalist, workshop and trans is looking for a gig with a group of dedicated, creative people. Will also help organize people looking for a full-time outfit. Contact Bill at (617) 369-3874. (23)

BARTENDER WANTS WORK PART OR FULL TIME. CALL RON 266-6947 BOS. (22)

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penpals

We get many requests from gays in prison to put pen pal ads in for them. Limited space prevents us from printing as many of these ads as we would like to, since the prisoners do not have the funds to pay for their ads. We will print more if anyone out there is willing to contribute. For each \$3 we receive we can print one more pen pal ad. Send checks to Penpals, GCN Box 492. (c)

ATTENTION INMATES

If you desire penpals, please contact M.C.C. of the Rockies, POB 9536, Denver, CO 80209. (c)

Lonely prisoner wants penpals. WM, 28 yrs, 5'8", 185, brown hair, blue eyes. Will answer letters. Robert J. Hdschack, 61119-115, P.O. Box 747, Starke, IL 62599. (22)

Prisoner considers himself to have been unfairly and "illegally" treated, seeks help for a defense fund. Will answer all letters. GWM, 29, Gerry Vernon McDonald, 36119-115, P.O. Box 1000, Marion, IL 62959. (22)

Gay male seeks correspondence. Billie L. Ruiz, 2149-135, P.O. Box 1000, Marion, IL 62959. (22)

Only 4 mos till release, would like to make some new friends. 6'7", 200, medium build, 21 yrs, blonde hair, blue eyes. Will answer letters. T.V., T.S., butch, fem, female gays. I love you all. David Greenfield, Box 747—051271, Starke, IL 62599. (22)

19, black hair, green eyes, 140, 5'9". Would like to hear from any one who cares to write. Will answer all letters. L. D. Paine, 021422, E-54, P.O. Box 221, Raiford, FL 32083. (22)

Young gay caucasian male incarcerated seeks correspondence with gays on the outside and long lasting friendship. Pierre Lior, 01498-158, P.O. Box 1000, Marion, IL 62959. (22)

organizations

BOSTON GAY CATHOLICS
Dignity/Boston sponsors EXODUS MASS, a liturgy gay and concerned Catholics every Sunday at Arlington Street Church (Boston), Boylston St. entrance at 5:30 p.m. For info, contact Dignity/Boston, 355 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02114. Tel. 536-6518. (35)

SUPPORT LESBIAN MOTHS
Lesbian Mothers National Defense Fund, 2446 Lorain Place, W. Seattle, WA 98109. (206) 282-5798. Membership \$5.00.

LUTHERANS
ALC, LCA and Mo. Uniting for justice, love, understanding in our church. Lutherans Concerned (for gay people), Box B-191144, Los Angeles, CA 90019.

NGTF NEEDS YOU
Join with the fastest, fastest growing gay civil rights group in the country! The National Gay Task Force works with a professional staff on media representation, national legislation, information clearinghouse, religious reforms, corporate non-discrimination statements, moral help support our work — join now. \$15 membership (\$5 limited income) Includes Newsletter. NGTF, 80 Fifth Ave., Rm. 506, New York, NY 10011.

GAY ACTIVISTS ALLIANCE NJ
—Men and women — Militantly gay — militantly proud — Join us at 176 Kansas St., Hackensack, NJ, every Fri. at 9 p.m. Political action caucus Tuesdays at 8:30 p.m. (201) 343-6402.

MONTACUSETT GAY ALLIANCE
Our group is forming in Fitchburg & there are so many gay people in this area. We will feature talk, speakers, understanding and gay parties! Come. (23)

THE GAY NURSES' ALLIANCE
needs your support if you are an RN, LPN/LVN, or student nurse. Basic membership is \$5.00 per year, which includes a subscription to our newsletter. (Contributions greater than \$5.00 are encouraged and appreciated). Many states are in need of coordinators to help organize local chapters. An apathetic nurse misses out on learning and growing experiences. Get involved! For more info, please write: GNA, P.O. Box 530, Back Bay Annex, Boston, MA 02117. (20)

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF WORCESTER, church service at 6 Institute Road, 2 p.m. Sundays. Rev. Jos. H. Gilbert, pastor. 756-0730. The 3rd year begins.

Metropolitan Community Church of Boston, services each Sunday at 7:00 p.m. (hymn sing 8:45), 131 Cambridge St., Boston (Old West Church). Edward T. Houghton, pastor. Office 523-7664. All persons are welcome.

COMING TO S.F. BAY AREA?
Stanford Gay People's Union welcomes you. Social hours, rag group, peer counseling, programs, parties. Phone (415) 497-1488; mail to Box 8265, Stanford, CA 94305.

CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING
Men, 40 and older, have problems different from young gay activists. Small discussion group forming NYC. Call (212) 242-8112 or write Burdick, Apt. 1C, 270 W. 25th St., NYC, NY 10001.

In New Jersey, the Gay Activist Alliance/Morris County meets every Monday at 8:30 p.m. using facilities of Unitarian Fellowship, Normandy Heights Rd., Morristown, NJ. Info: (201) 884-0853; 347-6234.

BAMBOO LOUNGE
30 Avery St.
Food, mixed.
BOSTON EAGLE
88 Queensberry St. 247-9586
Leather, Men, Thurs. Club Nite, Sunday Brunch 3PM, Movies Mon. & Tues. 8PM

CARNIVAL LOUNGE
39 Boylston St. 338-7159
Dancing, Mixed.

CHAPIN
27 Huntington Ave. 266-7778
Food, Men.

CITADEL
22 Avery St. 482-9040
Dancing, Men.

CLUB 76
76 Battery March St. 542-3377
Food, Mixed

COMMUNITY CLUB
252 Boylston St. 247-9308
Noon to 2AM, 7 days a week.
Dancing, Games, Food.

DELIVERY ENTRANCE
At The House Restaurant.
12 Wilton St., Allston 783-5701
Men & Women. "It's Different."

HARRY'S PLACE
45 Essex St.
Dancing, Men.

HERBIE'S RAMROD ROOM
12 Carter St. 338-8577
Leather, Men, Sunday Brunch 7PM, Thurs.

NAPOLEON CLUB
52 Piedmont St. 338-7547
Dancing Fri., Sat., Sun. Men.

PARADISE
180 Mass. Ave., Cambridge
Talking, Mostly Men, 864-4130

PLAYLAND
21 Essex St.
Men (Some Women).

119 MERRIMAC
119 Merrimac St. 523-8960
Dancing, Men, Tues-Thurs. Buffet 9-11PM

RAINBOW ROOM
15 Lansdowne St.
Disco Dancing, Men.

SAINTS
(Call 354-8807) Women.

SOMEWHERE
295 Franklin St. 423-7730
Disco Dancing, Mixed, Sunday Brunch 12-2PM

SPORTER'S CAFE
228 Cambridge St.
Food, Men, Saturday Brunch 5PM, Movies Mon., 3PM, Sunday Brunch 3PM.

STYX
20 Blagden St. 247-3910
Disco Dancing, Mixed.

THE SHED
272 Huntington Ave.
Leather, Men, Sunday Brunch 4PM.

TOGETHER
110 Boylston St.
Disco Dancing, Mixed.

1270
1270 Boylston St. 261-1257
Disco Dancing, Mixed (Mostly Men).

TWELVE CARVER
12 Carver St.
Men.

VERMONT
Counseling/Support for Gay Women, c/o Susan Katch, South VT Women's Health Center, 187 N. Main St., Rutland, VT 05701. 775-1518

Gay Student Union, Univ. of VT, Burlington
05401, M-F, 7-9 pm 866-4173

Women's Center, 182 Main St., Burlington 863-1236

NEW YORK (STATE)
Affirmation (Unitarian Universalist Gay Caucus), 34 Chestnut Rd., Delmar 12054

Capital District Gay Community Center (7-11pm), 332 Hudson Ave., Albany 12210 (518) 462-6138

Capital District Gay Political Caucus, 100 Albany, 12201 (518) 462-6138

Dignity/Integrity/Rochester, 42 Tyler House, 17 So. Fitzhugh St., Rochester 14614 (716) 232-6521

Empty Closet Collective, 1255 University Ave., Rochester 14607 (716) 271-6750

Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Inc., 713 Monroe Ave., Rochester (716) 244-8640

14614, Gay Brotherhood of Rochester, 713 Monroe Ave., Rochester (716) 244-8640

Gay Liberation Front, U. of R., Wilson College, Rochester 14607 (716) 275-6181

Gay Task Force, 713 Monroe Ave., Rochester (Mon. 7pm) (716) 244-8640 or 244-9030

Hamilton-Kirkland Gay Alliance, Box 80, Hamilton College, Clinton 13323

Lambda Uxii, Box 131, Albany 12201 (518) 462-6138

Lesbian Resource Center, 713 Monroe Ave., Rochester 14607 (716) 244-9030

NY State Coalition of Gay Organizations, 361 Albany 12201 (518) 462-6138

Stonewall Society, Poughkeepsie (914) 473-3857

NEW YORK (CITY) (Area Code 212)
Ass'n of Gay Social Workers, c/o Ron Ginsberg, 345 W. 21st St., apt. 1-A, Church of the Beloved Disciple, 348 W. 14th St., 10004, 242-6616

Gay People at Columbia, Columbia U., 10027 280-2574

Gay Teacher's Association, 204 Lincoln Pl., Brooklyn 11211 789-8176/499-1060

Gay Switchboard, Box 805, Madison Sq. Sta., 10010 727-1800

The Glines, 260 W. Broadway, Lambda Legal Defense, P.O. Box 5448, Grand Central Sta., 10017 758-1905

Lesbian History Archives, P.O. Box 1258, 10001 741-2610

Lesbian Switchboard, MCC/NY, 201 W. 13th St. 10011 242-1212

National Coalition of Gay Activists, P.O. Box A-711, Grand Central Sta., 10017

National Gay Task Force, 80 Fifth Ave., Rm 506 741-1010

Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop, 15 Christopher St. 255-8097

Tri-base Collective, 533-4492

West Side Discussion Group, 37 Ninth Ave. 675-0143

NEW HAMPSHIRE (Area Code 603)
MCC/Extension, 292 State St., Portsmouth 03801 382-4678

Nashua Area Gays 673-5315

NH Lambda, Box 1043, Concord 03301 228-8542

Northwood Women's Group, G. Ball, Box 273, RFD 1, Manchester 03104

NOW Lesbians Rights Task Force, 4 Valentine Hill Rd., Durham 02834

MAINE (Area Code 207)
CMGA, Box 2242, Augusta 04330

Confidential Drug and Alcohol Rap Group, Box 4542, Portland 04112

Gay People's Alliance, 92 Bedford St. 773-2981

University of Maine, Portland 04103 ext. 535

Growing, Sober and Gay, Box 893, Waterville 04901

Maine Freewoman's Herald, 193 Middle St., 3rd floor, Portland 04111 774-6071

Maine Gay Task Force, Box 4542, Portland 04112 773-5530

Maine Lesbian Feminists, Box 125, Belfast 04915

Mainly Gay, Box 4542, Portland 04112 773-5530

The Wilde-Stein Club, Memorial Union, University of Maine, Orono 04473

CONNECTICUT (Area Code 203)
"Come Out Tonight", 70 WYBC/Yale Station, New Haven 06520

CT Gay Task Force, P.O. Box 514, Hartford 06101 522-5575

Dignity/New Haven, P.O. Box 3712, Amity St., New Haven 06525

East Conn. Gay Alliance, Norwich George W. Henry Foundation, Hartford Gay Alliance at Yale, Box 2031, Yale Station, New Haven 06520 436-8945

Gay phone counseling (evens), New Haven 436-8945

WESTERN MASS. (Area Code 413)
Berkshire Community Gay Coalition, 4493 Pittsfield 01201 528-9433

Common Women Club, 78 Mason St., Northampton 01060 584-5800

Everywoman's Center, Amherst Gaybreak Radio (WUMLA-FM 91.9) 545-0883

Gay Women's Caucus, Amherst Lesbian Union, 9th floor, Campus Center UMass, Amherst 01003 545-2876

People's Gay Alliance, RSO 368 Student Union, UMass, Amherst, 1002 545-3438

Southwest Women's Center, Springfield Gay Alliance, Amherst Together, Box 427, Forest Park Sta., Springfield 01108 545-0154

Valley Women's Center, Northampton 586-2011

MASSACHUSETTS (Area Code 617)
Dignity Merrimack Valley P.O. Box 348, Lowell 08853

Everywoman's Center, Box 949, 14 Center St., Provincetown 02657 (46pm) 266-3444

Lesbian Support Group, Mercy Otis Warren Women's Center, 298 Main St., Hyannis 02601 333-0146

Martha's Vineyard Gay Group, Montachusett's Gay Alliance Box 262, Fitchburg 01420 742-2100

New Bedford Women's Clinic, Provincetown 24-Hour Drop-in Center 999-1570

Survival Crisis Line 426-9377

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Gay phone counseling (evens), New Haven 436-8945

calendar

28 mon

Cambridge — Boston chapter of NOW general meeting on "The Subtleties of Oppression: Women and Advertising/Women at Work" 8 pm, 99 Bishop Allen Dr.

Allston — 'Coming Out,' Course I. Meet Lesbian Women and Gay Men. Share and learn with others. Gay Education Service. 277-2484.

Williamstown, MA — Williams Gay Support Organization will sponsor a lecture by Bruce Voeller, Co-executive Director of the National Gay Task Force and Ginny Vida, Media Director for NGTF. 8 pm, Jesup Auditorium, Williams College.

1 thurs

NYC — Gay Women's Alternative at Universalist Church sponsors an evening of SOCIODRAMA with Clare Coss from the Institute of Human Identity. Also, The Homosexual and Religious Relevancy, a panel discussion with Subdeacon Miki of the Church of the Beloved Disciple and Mike Koonsman, founder of Integrity.

New York City — Association of Gay Social Workers will hold their meeting at 8 pm, 156 Prince St., Info. (212) 777-7977.

Boston — Seminar: Women, Ethnicity & Counseling — 8 week seminar beginning. For info call Oliva at Womanspace, a feminist therapy collective, 267-7992.

Boston — Erotic magazine night sponsored by the Viking Literary Guild. Erotic magazines for your reading pleasure at Herbie's Ramrod Room, 10pm.

2 fri

New York City — Gay people at Columbia monthly dance. 304 Earl Hall Center, 117th St. East on Broadway, Columbia Univ. Campus. \$2.50 general adm. 9 pm to 2 am.

Boston — Body, Mind & Spirit — a retreat weekend for women is being held on Dec. 2, 3, 4, in Acton, Maine. Info. WE-ARE 277-5944.

Boston — Women's weekend — a workshop focusing on self-awareness and relationships with others. Info. Alice or Nancy at Womanspace, 267-7992.

Boston — H. Harkness Flagler Birthday Celebration (Turn of the century gay philanthropist), 8 pm, 266 El Center, Northeastern Univ., by Northeastern Gay Students Org., everyone invited, free refreshments.

Cambridge — Center Screen presents a Boston area premiere of Tom Joslin's "Black Star, Autobiography of a Close Friend." 7:30 & 9:30, Carpenter Ctr. For Visual Arts, Harvard Union. \$2 admission. 253-7620.

Somerville — Holiday Auction and Bazaar sponsored by Somerville Women's Center, 10 pm to 5 pm at Somerville Multi-Service Center, 1 Summer St., Union Sq. Crafts, holiday decorations, baked goods, rummage sale and auction. Everyone welcome, child care provided. Info. 625-4488.

Cambridge — Book Bazaar by The Second Wave, 10 am to 6 pm, at Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. near Harvard Sq. New and used books, records, used clothing, refreshments.

4 sun

NYC — West Side Discussion Group, will present a special program devoted to gay men and women on film. The program will also feature a surprise featurette by Lenny Bruce. \$2. For info. (212) 675-0143.

SPECIAL GIFT RATES

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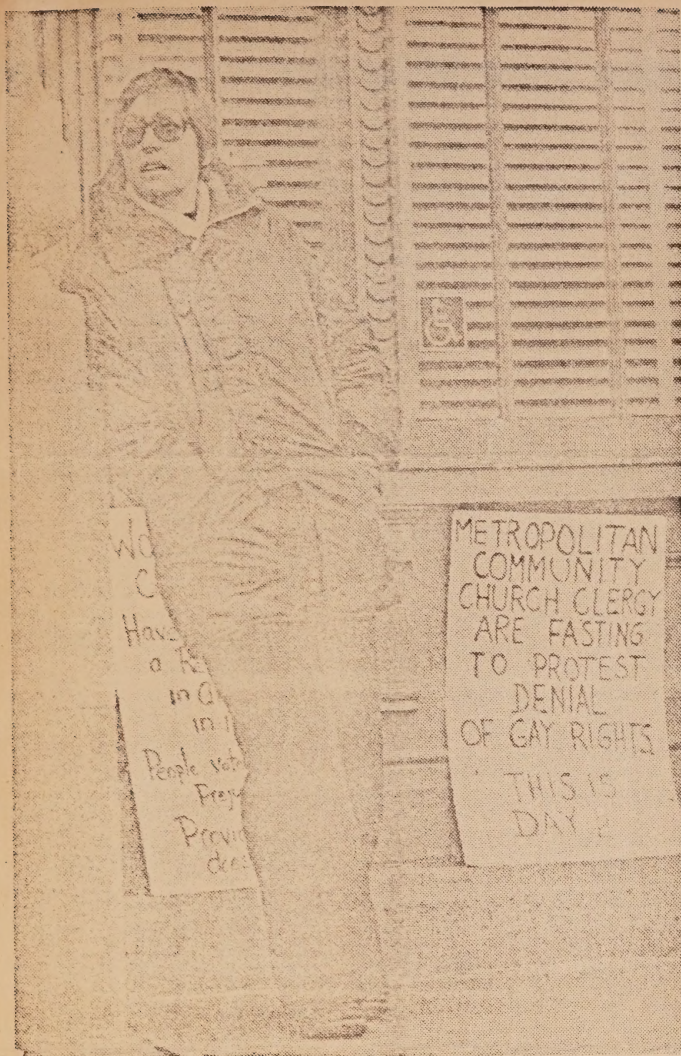
Soggy Stroll

The rain doesn't make the day any less gay for these homosexuals and their 1,500

supporters. They turned out in a down-pour Sunday afternoon to celebrate in Miami's 11th annual Gay Pride Parade. The parade stretched a mile through downtown Miami, from SW First Street and

Miami Avenue to Bicentennial Park, where drenched participants listened to speakers, danced to music and watched the best spectacle of all — each other. (See story, Page 2B.)

— TIM CHAPMAN / Miami Herald Staff



—Journal-Bulletin Photo by ANDY DICKERMAN

HUNGER STRIKE: Rev. Marge Ragona during the second day of her fast on the steps of the Federal Building in Providence.

Pastor protests vote on 'gay' rights

PROVIDENCE — The pastor of Providence's Metropolitan Community Church, which has a congregation of about 35 homosexuals, today was in the second day of a seven-day fast and vigil which she is conducting on the steps of the federal court house here.

The Rev. Marge Ragona, 49, said her demonstration is part of a protest being

mounted by about 150 homosexual clergymen around the country in cities which have turned down ordinances on homosexual civil rights.

Mrs. Ragona was joined at various times yesterday by church sexton Paul Paoletti and about half a dozen other men and women.

Paoletti said church members plan to keep vigil along with their pastor for each

of the seven nights. Special prayer services also will be held throughout the week.

Mrs. Ragona said she is not afraid of spending nights in downtown Providence while crusading for an unpopular cause.

"I have great faith in Providence's apathy and its lack of involvement in this sort of issue," she said.

rejected the U.N. partition decision of 1948 and repeatedly went to war to destroy the pre-1967 bordered Israel. There are well over one million Arabs with an oil cartel who live on millions of square miles of land; three and a half million Jews live on land the size of New Jersey.

The Arabs see all Israel as theirs. The Arab concept of holy war from the Koran allows no compromise: "Heaven awaits the avenger with great rewards." Israel is hated as a symbol of the loss of what was Arab controlled, and the Arabs' goal is world domination through oil and Koranic principles. If only in our identifying with the underdog we would truly see the underdog and the real uncompromising oppressor.

Daniel C. Juster
Rockville, Maryland

LEAVEN IN THE HUMAN DOUGH

I am a Catholic doing a six-month prison term for protesting the Trident nuclear weapons system. I was deeply moved by your interview with Fr. George Zabelka, former chaplain to the airmen who dropped the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki ("I Was Told It Was Necessary," August, 1980).

It was not so much what Fr. Zabelka said as the fact that he had the humility to say it that struck me. To my knowledge, his was an unprecedented and thereby refreshing confession to come from the many modern-day military chaplains, former or otherwise.

But despite Fr. Zabelka's confession, I do not agree with him that another ecumenical council to declare that "war is totally incompatible with Jesus' teaching" will have the kind of impact he suggests on the present nuclear arms race. Sadly, too many Christians, no matter what their various hierarchies declare, will continue to engage in and pay for warmaking.

Rather, I think individual Christians and Christian communities must move to their feet in outright nonviolent war resistance and then to their knees if the church, at least its growing remnant, is to act as Fr. Zabelka's "divine leaven in the human dough."

Johnny Baranski
Lompoc, California

TREASURE

I am simply delighted with Clark H. Pinnock's "...This Treasure in Earthen Vessels" in your October, 1980, issue. I find his awareness that the view of the

Scriptures of many conservatives is closer to the Moslem view of the Koran than to the Bible's own view of itself perceptive and congruent with my own study of both Islam and Christianity. He appears to have discovered what I am discovering, that we must understand the phenomenon of Scripture in the light of God's purpose and providence and not deduce a doctrine of the same from God's nature and perfection.

A. H. Mathias Zahniser
Greenville, Illinois

Clark Pinnock's article "This Treasure in Earthen Vessels" is the best short piece on the inspiration of Scripture I have read in a long time. He cuts through the cant and gets to the heart of the matter simply and faithfully. I shall certainly be using it with my students in seminary.

M. B. Handspicker
Newton Centre, Massachusetts

I was appalled at the dreadful exegesis (actually eisegesis) used by Clark H. Pinnock in his article "This Treasure in Earthen Vessels." Dr. Pinnock's article was based on 2 Corinthians 4:7: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us."

I consider it asinine exegesis to twist 2 Corinthians 4:7 to make it apply to the Bible rather than to human beings, which any honest exegete would do. The verse refers to the infilling of the Holy Spirit which we receive, not to the inspiration of the Bible. Thus, the entire basis of Pinnock's article is invalid.

Pinnock's befuddled view of exegesis is only another sad example of how good men's minds become clouded when they move away from the inerrancy of the Bible.

R. L. Hymers
Hollywood, California

UNRESPECTABLE REASONING

From time to time you publish articles on the death penalty, and I've found myself disagreeing. So I read Larry Cox's article, "Respectable Torture" (October, 1980), with particular care, because I thought your reasons for opposing any execution might be explained. But Cox's arguments would apply better for opposing the unfair application of the death penalty. For example, if poor blacks are more likely to be executed than are rich whites, then we should fight this racial injustice;

racism here is the enemy, not the death penalty.

Cox wrote, "The arguments used to justify the death penalty, if valid, also justify political imprisonment and torture." One argument for the death penalty is that it guarantees that the rapist-murderer who is executed won't rape and murder another little girl. How can this argument be used to justify political imprisonment and torture?

Life on this planet is a privilege which God can revoke. It seems clear to me in Scripture that God has delegated the responsibility for revoking it, in some cases, to the state. The rapist-murderer has forfeited his right to continued life.

Some of us want reform in how the death penalty is used, not its abolition. And we're not all cruel and vengeful.

Bernice Krahn
Snohomish, Washington

SERIES MISTAKE

It was with a great sense of disappointment and sorrow that I read the October issue of *Sojourners*. For so long you have been a stalwart source of help in discerning our troubled times. But just when we most needed a call to be full of faith—when we most needed a reminder that justice, however long awaited, will ultimately prevail—you let us down.

I refer, of course, to the fact that in your editorial on the World Series you ignored a chance for prophetic witness by refusing to even entertain the idea that the championship could be won by the Philadelphia Phillies.

Oh ye of little faith.

Philip Harnden
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

How red Danny Collum's face must be! Despite the large number of teams he suggested might win the World Series ("It's Selection Time," October, 1980), he failed to include the team—our team—which actually won the Series, the Philadelphia Phillies.

Since your readers thus have no way to interpret the eschatological significance of that victory, we offer the following help: It means that America is now under the benign reign of Quaker consensus and nonviolence, that it will be spiritually energized by William Penn's inner-worldly mysticism and kept amused by Ben Franklin's wry wit. Biblical people will recognize that this is indeed a new day.

The staff of *The Other Side* magazine
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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the members completed back at Norton, he emerged as a "High-D" personality — highly dominant. "No, I think it's the other way around," he tells Weiner. "The group let you down."

"I kind of feel responsible," says Jack Bresnahan. "I thought I could high-jump it. I should have seen that there was not much of a runway there. Besides, I haven't high-jumped in 25 years."

We discuss our failure to let our leader take charge, our hurried teamwork, our lack of careful planning. We resolve to do better next time.

After lunch, Tony Mickewicz asks me to be his partner. I am flattered. In his early 60s, Tony is the oldest member of our group and the oldest Norton employee here. He is almost exactly my father's age and is a throwback to the working world as I saw it in my own factory days. At first glance, he is almost comical. He wears plaid polyester pants and thin vinyl boots, neither of which looks very warm. He is an erect man with a large, bulbous nose and the low-pitched, booming voice of a born orator. But he has spent much of his working life as a janitor, or a "sanitation worker," as he puts it. He is now a foreman in housekeeping, where he supervises 46 employees. He will probably retire soon, and it seems to me a waste of money to send a man with so little time left in the company to a supervisory institute. But I sense that he is the kind of worker who must be forced to take a vacation, that sending him here is a way of getting him away from the plant for a few days. Everything he does seems to be characterized by simplicity and directness, and it is typical of him that, when asked to name the most beautiful place he has ever visited, he wrote, "New England."

In the snow, we are off to the

ropes course. Here, back in the woods, an array of rope bridges, ladders, platforms, and webs has been strung among the trees. It is Outward Bound on a small scale, and its purpose is to test our individual courage, our abilities to set goals for ourselves and to achieve them. It is also meant to test our camaraderie. Allen cautions us that we need not do any of it. Set an attainable but challenging goal, he advises, and try to meet it.

Tony says he will go up the "small ships" ladder and come down. Because of his back, he will do no more, and getting into the spirit of things, I encourage him to achieve that modest goal. He dons an orange rock-climbing helmet, clips a belay onto his harness, and I hold the ladder and encourage him some more as he slowly works his way up and down. Then he goes over to a 50-gallon drum where Allen has built a fire, and he stays there, keeping warm. He seems distant, uninvolved, and I leave him to help others in the group.

Above me, on a 30-foot-tall spider's web that has been spun of one-inch rope between two trees, Kathy Kelly, a mounted-wheel-press operator and substitute supervisor, is having trouble near the top of the web. She must cross over from the web to a branch in a tree, and she is afraid. We yell that we are behind her and she finally makes the leap.

Across from Kathy, meanwhile, Bruce Weiner is having problems of his own. He has climbed the small ships, crossed a rope bridge, and ascended another rope ladder onto a platform high up in a tree. There he must clip into a cable suspended from an apparatus that will slide along a wire down to the ground 50 feet away — a zip line. Bruce is hooked in, but sitting there on

the platform, he can't move. Tony Lahnston is on the platform with him, but Bruce's eyes are bulging from his head as he surveys the distance he must fall. Although it is snowing and the temperature is around 30 degrees, his face is covered with sweat. "Hey, Bruce," someone shouts up to him, "can I have your parking space if you don't make it?"

Soon the entire group is at the end of the zip line urging Bruce on. We are clapping and calling out. Slowly, an inch at a time, he eases himself off the platform and zips down into the waiting arms of us all.

Afterward, in the debriefing, we discuss fear. "It's not just you out there," says Dick Fleming, a 25-year man and a shift supervisor, "it's the group you're in." Bruce and Kathy discuss their own fears and how the group's support helped them along. They have learned how manageable their fright can be once they confront it and allow others to help.

I am beginning to distrust all this good feeling. I have no doubt that it is sincere, that everyone in the group really does feel a sense of loyalty and respect for one another, but the mutual praise seems to be coming too easily. I suspect that these are intelligent people and that, after years as workers obeying supervisors and fitting in with company ways, they have evolved a sixth sense for anticipating how to please the boss. Consciously or not, they have caught on early to the idea that they have come here to work as a team, and sensing that this is what is expected of them, they are making all the proper teamwork noises. Later, I discuss this with Allen, and he says yes, no doubt my perception is correct, but that within the next couple of days he hopes to break this "love-in" atmosphere down. I

remember Lahnston's comment about trying to "facilitate the breaking down of barriers," and I decide to wait and see.

The following morning we are off on a trek through the woods, on snowshoes. Before going out, we struggle with snowshoe bindings. Many in the group have never worn them before, and when I see Tony Mickewicz struggling to put his on, I go over and help him get the straps good and tight. Then we're off on a kind of treasure hunt. Over the next few hours, we must follow compass bearings through the woods from one station to another. At each one is a new problem for us to solve, as well as directions for reaching the next packet of instructions. At one point, half of us are blindfolded and the other half are forbidden to talk, so new forms of communication and cooperation must be improvised. Dick Fleming, who wears snowshoes when he hunts deer in Maine, obviously fancies himself something of an outdoorsman, and he becomes our leader for the trek. Bruce Weiner, who reads our map and compass, tries to follow, but it is evident that he is restraining himself, trying not to criticize Dick's leadership. He attempts to stay near the rear of the group, but while he's getting a compass bearing the group moves out of sight in the woods ahead. Meanwhile, Tony's feet are getting cold.

The debriefing afterward begins on the same teamwork note as before. "I've never been dependent on anybody since I was a kid," says John Horan, who had been blindfolded and was led by a mute member of the group. But a different note is beginning to creep into our discussions. Bruce is asked why he stayed in the background this time. "I guess I bit my lip," he says. "I wasn't the leader. I didn't want to be overpowering or domineering."

"Dick?" asks Allen. "Do you want to say what it was like to lead this morning?"

"It was a bitch," Dick replies.

The ideas underlying the Supervisory Institute at Norton and the Executive Challenge Program at the Sargent Camp come from a variety of disciplines. They seem close to the ideas of progressive education and behavioral science; most of the staff here have education credentials or experience in group counseling or programs like Outward Bound. It is sometimes startling to hear the Norton people, men and women whose everyday language revolves around making abrasives, start talking about "feedback" and "sharing." Discussions of personal trust and self-respect are not what I'd expected from the mouths of manufacturers of grinding wheels. But within this group, at least, an attitude of trust and acceptance has been building, and this makes it possible, as Allen says, "to try new behaviors," and also to see, perhaps for the first time, the inefficient ways in which we communicate and get things done. For a few days, the rules of the cold, cruel working world have been turned on their heads in these New Hampshire woods, and I am beginning to sense ways in which this is affecting the members of my group. A few are even beginning to raise the most important question of the program: "What does snowshoeing blindfolded through the forest have to do with going to work every day at the Norton Company?"

John Conn, Norton's manager of organizations and employee development, designed the Supervisory Institute a couple of years ago, and he is still trying to work out the answer to that. Conn founded the institute when

he decided that business schools were fine at teaching technical skills like finance and economics but were poor at examining and imparting what makes for effective supervisors. Deciding to look at the question himself, Conn had the novel idea of actually going into the factory, working various shifts and jobs, and asking the workers what they thought. He quizzed more than 100 supervisors and workers. "I asked, 'If you were to design a program for your supervisor, for your boss, what would you put into it?'" What they told him, Conn says, was that supervisors don't listen and don't ask workers what they think. The workers "said that they were always hearing the bad news, and that they were unclear about what was expected from them."

Borrowing from his own experiences and from his readings in behavioral science, Conn came up with a program that not only would examine the work environment but also would look at the issue of motivation. "What does motivating people take today?" he asks. "How do you treat your people? Do you treat them as dummies?" Conn concluded that what motivates workers is the challenge to be respected and included. If a man works at a machine for 15 years and a problem develops around that machine, why not consult the worker? As Barry Carden, Norton's coordinator of employee development, says, "These are remarkably sophisticated, intelligent people. They're a hell of a lot more aware of the world around them than we think they are. There are tremendous skills, abilities, and desires in these individuals, and they are finally being recognized as capable people."

The Executive Challenge Program fits into the four-month institute by giving these same people an opportunity to learn firsthand how critical to solving work problems are listening, specific communication, and teamwork. In the greatly simplified world of Sargent Camp, ideas can be heard without the static that would surround them back at the shop. The need for communication and cooperation, for example, is never more clearly recognized than when a blindfolded supervisor is trying to understand one who is forbidden to speak. This is experiential learning, and many people take back to the shop the realization that the way out of their rut lies in looking at their subordinates as something more than appendages of various machines. In addition, they go back having learned something about themselves and their own sensitivities. And they often go back with fire in their eyes. They end up disappointed. "We tell them," John Conn explains, "When you go back to that factory, don't think that that world will necessarily be ready to receive you. When you go back in there, keep in mind the reality you go back into. If you go back in there thinking you can suddenly change the work place, you're going to be very frustrated. Change takes time. Be realistic."

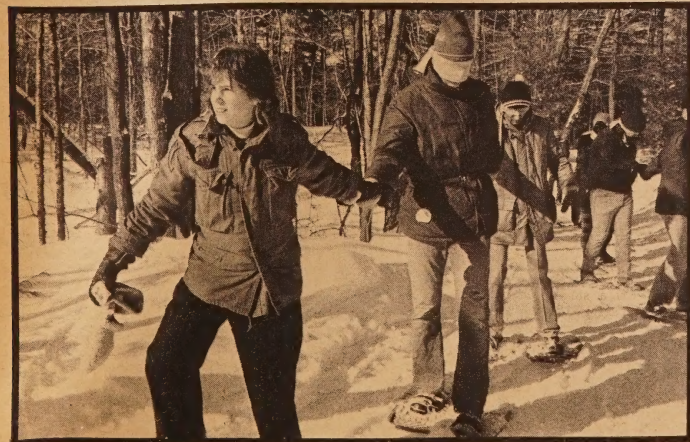
After dinner, we try to understand "feedback," or "information to someone else on the effects of their behavior." Allen asks each of us to write down a piece of feedback for each of the others in the group. Then he asks for volunteers to read their feedback.

Tony surprises me by volunteering first. He surprises me even more by addressing his feedback to me. "Norm," he says in his loud, deep voice, "when I was putting on my snowshoes this morning, I was obviously having trouble, and you came over and got down on your knees and helped me out. And the fact

Continued on page 13



Dick Fleming and Tony Mickewicz



New forms of communication and cooperation must be improvised.

Life sentences

RIP ERA



But how hard should we cry at the funeral?

by Anita Diamant

Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.
— the proposed 27th Amendment

It stinks: with three states needed to ratify and the June 30 deadline looming ever closer, the Equal Rights Amendment looks doomed. Even though polls have consistently shown that Americans support the ERA by a two-to-one majority. Even though 16 states — including Mormon Utah — have passed constitutional equal-rights provisions. Even though pro-ERA groups have spent millions of dollars and countless hours on national and state campaigns to get those 24 words added to the U.S. Constitution.

It stinks, but there it is. What the ERA's defeat will actually mean, however, is unclear. Phyllis Schlafly *et al* will congratulate themselves about having saved the American family. *Ms.* magazine has already assigned a story about the kinds of sophisticated and expensive strategies mustered by the Right against the ERA in various states. The media in general will, no doubt, treat it as a grave crisis for the American women's movement because, for the last five years, many ERA supporters have been running around and getting quoted on how the amendment is "both the symbol and the substance of the women's movement."

Well, political rhetoric is notorious for overstatement, but though the battle won't be over until July 1 (and political miracles do happen), that well-intentioned but facile phrase has already begun to haunt the future.

If the ERA were truly symbol and substance (it sounds positively religious, doesn't it?) of the women's movement, if it represented a distillation of the challenge to sex roles, sexism, and sexuality that's been voiced over the past decade, then the failure of the amendment would signal the death of feminism. But it's not so. You simply cannot equate the ERA with a continuing cultural revolution that daily redefines the way women and men think about themselves and their responsibilities to one another.

But if July 1 is, finally, the ERA's burial day, the headlines will banner a death knell for feminism, the columnists will gloat or moan (as is their wont) and... what? Husbands who have been sharing the housework for the last seven years will not suddenly hang up their dish towels and tell the little women to take care of business in the kitchen. Organizations like *9to5* will not close up shop, and neither will the Association of Latin American Women, nor the Rhode Island Feminist Theater. The psychologists who have developed, published, and taught new theories about women's person-

alities will not revert to the penis-envy paradigm of female inadequacy. Women will not disappear from the driver's seats of buses or from jogging paths or TV anchor posts. If shelters for battered women close their doors, it will be the fault of Proposition 2½ and/or Reagan's military spending spree — not because the ERA died.

Which is not to say that the defeat of the ERA won't hurt. Substantively, states with equal-rights provisions have shown progress in a range of legal and legislative areas. The NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund has assembled an impressive packet of information showing how state ERAs help set precedents that benefit women in a variety of ways.

Still, even if the national ERA were to be passed, in the context of a Reagan administration it could provide little guarantee of progressive policies or an improved legal or legislative outlook. One might expect that, with the ERA, there would be far-reaching changes in the Social Security System regarding compensation for homemakers. Of course, those changes wouldn't mean a thing now that the Social Security System is being gutted. And if you had to measure the benefits that the Massachusetts ERA has brought us against the contributions made by the handful of committed feminist legislators on Beacon Hill, I doubt that the ERA would come out on top. In other words, a national ERA could not, in itself, create a context for reform.

The loss of the ERA fight will do serious symbolic damage to the idea of the women's movement as a mainstream political force. The ERA is the most visible and widely acceptable single issue identified with feminism. It's so vague and bland, the support it has thereby attracted is so diverse, that political meaning is ambiguous, to say the least. Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians, and Socialists have hopped on the ERA bandwagon. There are a good number of anti-abortion activists on board as well as virtually all prochoicers. There are business leaders and college students, lawyers and maids.

The failure of the ERA will be taken to mean that the women's movement has not yet achieved political clout — that it cannot deliver the least divisive item on its own agenda, that it is small-time, penny-ante and not to be taken seriously at times when the big boys are dividing the spoils.

The questions "Why did the ERA die?" and "How did you screw up so badly?" are currently being tossed in feminists' faces — whether or not said feminists happen to be ERA activists. Underlying these classic blame-the-victim queries is the still untarnished assumption that the deck wasn't stacked, that we live in a land of opportunity and open access,

where justice will out.

ERA supporters had more to do than win over the apathetic masses, which were, arguably, much ignored by an elite reformist movement. They had to fight the well-funded, well-organized, and much-underestimated ERA opposition. That opposition is formidable: white, conservative, rich, well-connected, powerful, fearful of change — in other words, the people for whom Reagan's tax package is such a bonanza. That the ERA issue has stayed alive as long as it has is testimony to the tenacity of the amendment's advocates and to its popular and common-sense appeal. And besides, in this, the land of lobbyists and political payoffs, since when does right make might?

Confronted with the loud "Why?" left in the wake of the ERA debacle, many liberal feminists are looking more conservative, back-pedaling furiously on issues they were never too fond of in the first place: abortion and what is called, at arm's length, "gay rights." Their lament goes, "If only the women's movement had stuck to *business* — the ERA — we'd be planning our victory parties today."

The fuzzy thinking that gave us that unfortunate "symbol and substance" slogan comes of a bad historical memory. The second wave of American feminism did not begin as an ERA caucus. It grew from consciousness-raising groups held in kitchens and living rooms. And the first item on the agendas there was far more likely to be birth control or orgasm than constitutional guarantees of equality.

The ERA did not precede tougher issues like abortion and sexuality — it followed them. But because it was simpler and less threatening, because it could so easily be fit into the rules of the game as it is played, ERA was adopted as the cause célèbre of the mainstream women's movement; NOW, the National Women's Political Caucus, women's professional associations, and the like. And since these were the groups that sought and got press coverage, the women's movement and feminism came to be identified with ERA and not necessarily with issues like abortion or violence against women, universally available day care, the feminization of America's underclass, the challenge of love between equals, the vindication of housework as an economic necessity. These and a hundred other feminist concerns were relegated, in popular discourse, to back burners, while the business of the women's movement narrowed to the real-politics of getting the 27th Amendment ratified.

Sadly, the ERA mobilization has tended to shrivel the public notion of what the women's movement is all about. It has shrunk a mind-expanding theory called feminism into one conven-

ient, bite-sized morsel. And the ERA's defeat is, in effect, another announcement that a cultural revolution cannot be neatly and peacefully legislated. The amendment's opponents deserve credit for having taken so seriously the challenges and changes that are implied even in the apparently harmless bill.

In reality, the death of the ERA is a legislative and judicial (because the judiciary would probably have the most to do with its implementation) setback. But because of the primacy given the ERA by the largest and most visible women's groups, and by attendant media attention to it, the setback threatens to have some serious psychological consequences.

Perhaps it will vindicate the sexism of some, but the impact on those who have fought for so long will vary. Some will, no doubt, be terribly discouraged and withdraw from all forms of activism. Others will plunge into electoral and party politics, having been well trained by their years with the ERA campaign.

The feminist movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries culminated in 1920, when women finally won the right to vote. The suffrage battle absorbed the time and energy of American feminists almost to the exclusion of everything else — even certain scruples. (During World War I, some of the National Women's Suffrage Association's leaders withdrew from women's peace organizations and toned down rhetoric about the pacifism of their sex in exchange for political favors that were eventually repaid with the endorsement of the 19th Amendment.) The movement became so narrow that after the vote was won, it seemed pointless to continue. To continue doing what? There was no compelling answer to that question in 1920, and the women's movement went to sleep for 50 years.

I doubt that a victory for the ERA in June would result in a similar collapse of feminist activity. But its defeat may well mean that those whose entire feminist analysis and commitment was summed up on their ERA buttons will have to rethink their polite distance from the messier issues that inevitably attach themselves to any struggle for women's self-determination. Women's rights cannot be divorced from issues of reproductive and sexual freedom. They come with the territory. The Right knows this, and it's time for mainstream feminists to recognize it as well.

Today, the women's movement is so diversified, so rich in ideas, publications, institutions, associations, and activities that have nothing to do with the ERA, that the end of one battle on this one front — either in victory or in defeat — will not mean the end of the whole campaign. In fact, this war metaphor, which works so very well in reference to the ERA, breaks down in discussing the broader project of which the ERA is only a small part. The whole project is the redefinition of "equality" in ways that the ERA has never dreamed of. □

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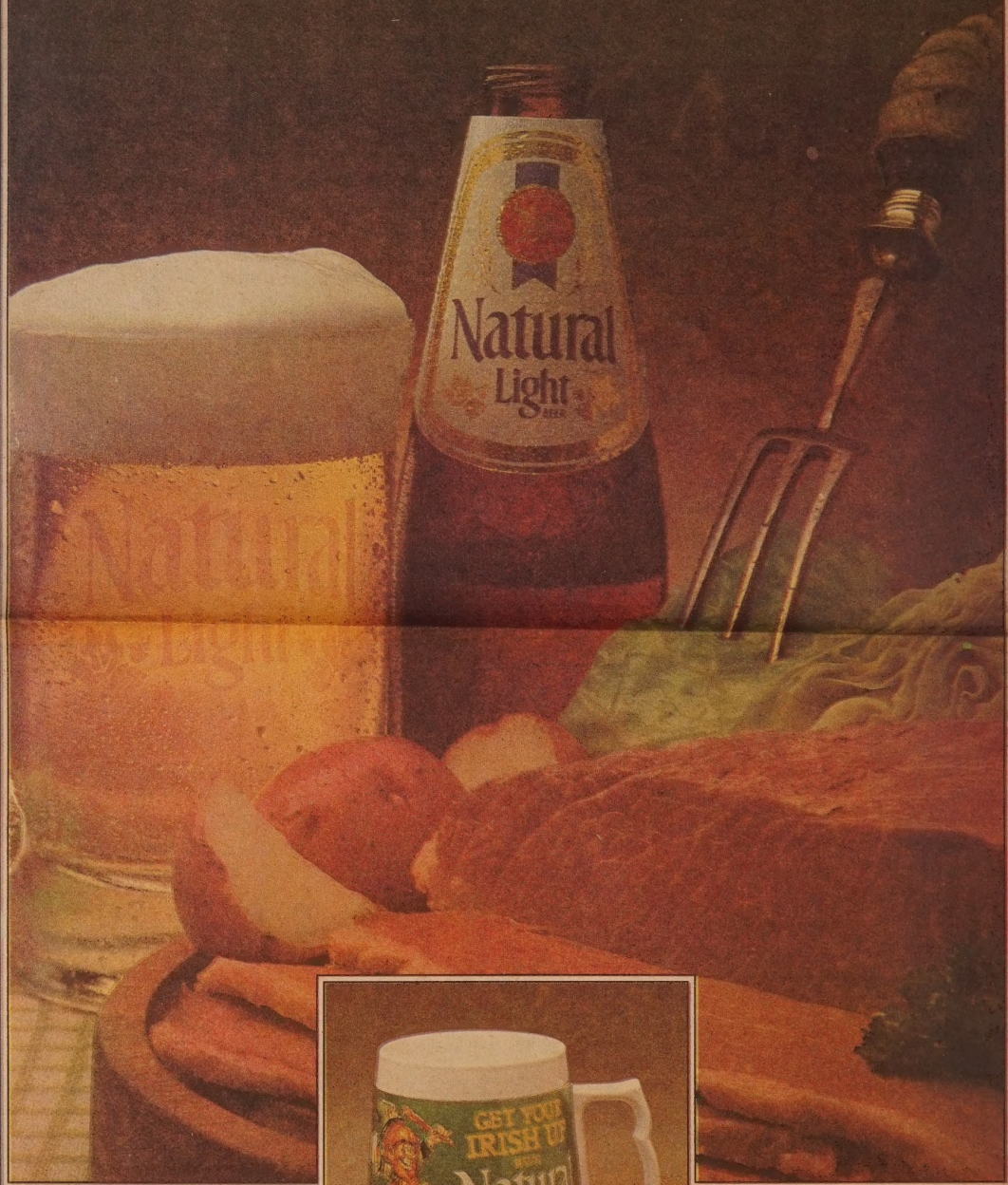
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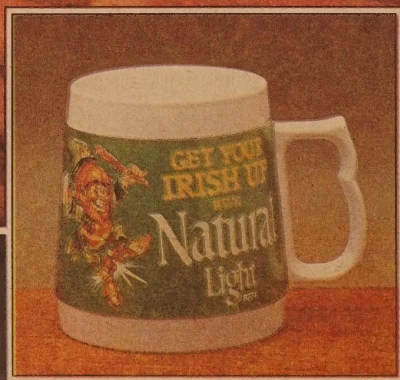
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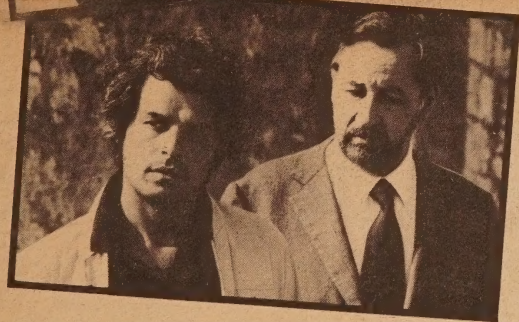
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'THREE BROTHERS'

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on a new
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Battered but unbroken

Confronting child abuse in the playroom

by Kathie Min

Inside the brown turn-of-the-century house on Egremont Road in Brighton lies a child's paradise. One big room contains a Jungle Gym and slide, and toys and books scattered across the carpeted floor. Another room, with child-size tables and chairs, a TV set, and some goldfish in a glass bowl, is for painting and other artistic experiments. On an enclosed porch there's a low trough of water where children can blow bubbles and sail ships.

In the morning, after the kids have been picked up by bus or van, their things tucked away in wooden lockers, and their breakfast served, the place awakens to the shrieks and hollers of playtime.

In the room with the Jungle Gym, two of the smaller children sit on a volunteer's lap, listening intently as she reads *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*. She is ad-libbing the story rather than reading the text, pausing to ask

them questions. "What do you think is going to happen next?" An angelic-looking girl with close light-brown braids looks puzzled and slowly shakes her head.

Two observers strolling through the play area are accosted by a three-year-old who's big enough to be six or seven. He starts tying them together loosely with a long piece of knitted yarn.

"Why are you tying me up, Lester?" asks one. "None of your business," replies Lester, continuing with his work.

"If you're tying me up, it's my business."

"Shut the fuck up," Lester shouts.

Lester is one of the 3000 or so children reported abused and/or neglected in the Boston area last year. The troubled paradise he visits every weekday is the Parents'

Continued on page 8

After a cop kills

by Michael Matza

The gun is a .38-caliber, six-shot, Smith & Wesson revolver, serial number 7D35162. It's the standard weapon issued to Somerville cops. This one was issued to Patrolman Noland LaCroix.

These days, it's under lock and key at the Somerville District Court, where it has been since it was introduced as evidence at an October inquest as the gun that killed Steven Vernon Ford. More than he wants anything else in this world, Noland LaCroix wants the gun back. If his boss, Somerville Police Chief Arthur Pino, has his way, LaCroix is not going to get it.

Born in Flint, Michigan, on September 11, 1955, Noland was dubbed "Buzzy" by a nurse on the maternity ward. He says he doesn't really understand the derivation of his nickname, but his mother liked it and it stuck. Buzzy LaCroix it was, and Buzzy LaCroix it always would be. His father, a postal supervisor, moved the family to Somerville, to be near his wife's parents, when Buzzy was one. He grew up there, a product of the city's school system and a student of the harsher lessons that can be learned on the corners of its intractable squares. Years later, when he had realized his childhood ambition to become a police officer, he would tell his friends, "You can always tell the guys who were born for the job. I'm a street cop 150 percent. That's where I belong. Out in the street. I grew up in the gutter, I'll stay in the gutter. I like it out there."

After dropping out of high school in his junior year, he joined the Marine Corps, completing basic training six months before American troops were ordered out of Vietnam. Although he has the swagger of an adventurer, and readily

Continued on page 6

This just in...

edited by T.A. Frail

I GET NO BOOT FROM CHAMPAGNE

Some people will do anything for publicity, and others will do anything for a drink. Now, for an indefinite time only, the Crossroads Restaurant, at 405 Beacon St. in the Back Bay, is offering a free drink to anyone who presents proof that his or her car has received the Denver boot. "When you go downtown to pay," says Crossroads manager Kathy Sullivan, "you get a computer readout listing your fines and a police towing receipt. We'd rather the law, but both are good." Happy hour indeed.



TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER

Would you hire Larry Sanders?

Age, 41. Married, three children. Education, sixth grade. Work history, unskilled labor.

Health: open heart surgery May 30, 1972; blood clots causing motor impairments on right side with occasional loss of speech; could not hear in left ear; high blood pressure and fluid buildup; heart attack and cardiac arrest in June of 1981; pain in neck, shoulders, and back with limited movements; could not sit more than 30 minutes without pain; cramps in legs and feet; swelling, dizziness, shortness of breath, no physical strength, excessive perspiration and loss of appetite; ongoing drainage of cyst incision in lower back.

You might conclude that this man was disabled, but last July the Social Security bureaucracy, under pressure from the Reagan administration to speed up reviews of those getting Social Security disability benefits, said Larry Sanders of Attmore, Alabama, could indeed go to work. In August, his disability benefits were cut off.

The rest of the story is told concisely in a memo the *Phoenix* obtained from a source in touch with the Legal Services Corporation of Alabama, advocates who were trying to help Sanders.

"I wrote the client's doctors. One wrote back on Oct. 15, 1981, saying he was not disabled although he had written to the Social Security Administration (SSA) on Aug. 3, 1981, stating client was disabled. The other doctor never answered. We filed for reconsideration on Oct. 15, 1981. Client called on Jan. 4. Said he was working at a self-serve gas station. Said he had no choice but to work to support his family.

"Jan. 21, 1982, client's wife called. Said client had a massive coronary attack on Jan. 19 while at work and died Jan. 20. She said the doctor told her it was such a massive attack it blew the top of his heart right off."

BALLPARK FIGURES

If the Boston City Council allows the Red Sox to finance their 588 seats' worth of rooftop luxury boxes by floating \$10 million worth of Industrial Revenue Bonds, it will not, as has been rumored, be dumping the city's tax revenue into the laps of Sox owners Haywood,

Sullivan and Buddy LeRoux. The real beneficiaries will be the banks who lend the Sox the money for the project.

The bonds are designed to stimulate investment in areas of the city in which banks might otherwise be reluctant to invest. Kenmore Square is one such area.

The banks give the borrower a reduction of approximately one-third off the interest rate charged (the current rates, of course, are at near-record highs). In return, the banks — not the borrowers — get the tax breaks, because the interest they do collect is exempt from federal income taxes.

One can argue that there are worthier enterprises for banks to lend money to than the creation of luxury boxes atop Fenway Park, but to condemn the process by which it is done is either demagogic or naive in the extreme. Our governor, our mayor, and all other pols who think they can take credit for it frequently point with pride to the state's "good business climate." Sweetheart tax deals for banks, and subsequent savings for on-the-ball businesses, are the stuff that such climates are made of. Many, many other businesses will profit from deals like this, at far greater dollar sums, without eliciting any comment at all from pols, the press, or the public. Indeed, communities throughout the Commonwealth will vie to give away the most tax dollars to businesses, the better to control that all-important climate.

Giving tax breaks to stimulate investment is a questionable social policy at best, because of cases like this, where

millions are spent with no guarantee of the desired result — i.e., a better Kenmore Square. But don't blame Sullivan and LeRoux as the city council's study committee goes about its work. The Red Sox will win the World Series long before the tax break is ever eliminated by the body politic.

PARTY AFFILIATION

Gerald Morris, the governor's press secretary, was understandably uneasy about the inquiry. The reporter, after all, wanted to know whether George Collatos, the former city of Boston employee who only days before pleaded guilty to a federal extortion charge, had been doing any political work for Governor Edward J. King.

Morris's response was categorical. Absolutely not, he assured the reporter. This response was categorically untrue.

In fact, on October 14, 1981 — precisely one week before he was arrested by FBI agents in Dedham after a high-speed chase — Collatos, a long-time employee of the Boston Redevelopment Authority, sponsored a political campaign party for King at the Hotel Meridian in Post Office Square in downtown Boston. The *Phoenix* has obtained a copy of a receipt for expenses related to the party.

Apparently, Collatos invited about two dozen of his friends to the party to meet King. Those in attendance included

contractors, architects, bankers, lawyers, and real-estate interests. It is not clear whether Collatos obtained contributions for King at the party or planned to solicit attendees in the following weeks.

One source told the *Phoenix* that Collatos had told King of his plans to hold the party and had received a promise that the governor would try to make an appearance. According to one person who attended, "King and two of his troopers" made an appearance that night at the Meridian. "He spoke to everyone personally and individually," this source said.

When the reporter apprised Morris of details of the party, in an interview a few days after the original one, the press secretary had a less categorical response. "Okay," said Morris, "he (Collatos) never did any fund-raising for us, and we never intended him to do any for us." Morris did acknowledge that King had attended the party at the Meridian. He said King was in the hotel for another affair, and afterward, "we just had to kill 30 minutes."

ORIENTATION PERIOD

At 2 p.m. Central Standard Time on Thursday, February 25, Wisconsin Governor Lee Dreyfus became the nation's first governor to sign a state law explicitly banning discrimination against lesbians and gay men. The bill, which had been introduced by state Representative David Clarenbach (D-Madison), passed both houses of the state legislature with strong support from a number of religious organizations. Essentially, it extends a law that prohibits discrimination on racial and other grounds with the addition of the words "sexual orientation."

The *Gay Community News* reported last week that the new law would prohibit discrimination in housing, employment in both the public and the private sectors, and the National Guard. Firms with state contracts are also bound by the measure. Dreyfus, a Republican, had said he had "no problem" with the bill, provided it did not require affirmative action. The measure explicitly states that affirmative action is not required.

While the governors of three states — Michigan, Pennsylvania, and California — have issued executive orders banning discrimination on the basis of sexual preference, none is as far-reaching as the Wisconsin law, and none required the approval of the legislature; though they were subject to legislative veto. Similar legislation is regularly considered and defeated by such august bodies as the New York City council and the Massachusetts legislature.

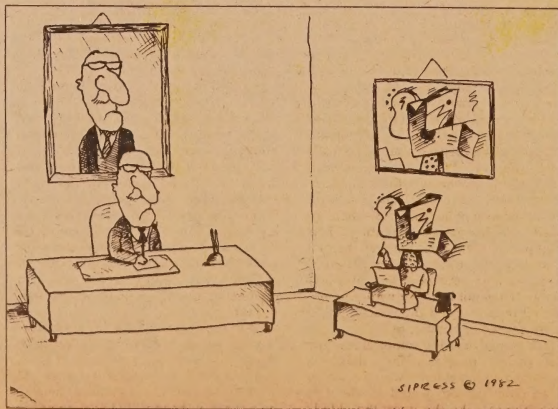
MUTE AMBITION

Now it can be told: the Republican slate of candidates for state office is not as top-heavy as it might seem, what with five people running for the party's gubernatorial nomination and two of them in the hunt for the US Senate.

Although no one on the Republican State Committee is saying anything one way or the other, sources within the GOP hierarchy have indicated that the following people have yielded themselves up: long-time party activist Jody Dow, for secretary of state; New Bedford City Councilor Rosalyn Brooker, for attorney general; and one-time Senatorial candidate Michael Robertson, for state treasurer. These sources also said that no candidate for auditor has yet emerged, although Wayne Budd has apparently declined to run, leaving the field open for Chip Faulkner of Citizens for Limited Taxation.

There isn't likely to be much opposition to any of these choices at the state convention, next Saturday. "All we want," said one GOP hopeful, "is not to have to run around the floor asking people if they want to be auditor."

Hats off this week to Anita Diamant, Richard Gaines, Michael Gee, Renee Loth, Alan Lupo, and Charles P. Pierce.



~A Critical Perspective on the Burger Court~
featuring presentations by:

- ~Lennox Hinds, Executive director of National Conference of Black Lawyers,
on Minority Issues.
- ~Karl Klare, Northeastern University Law professor,
on Labor.
- ~Marge Ragona, Minister, Metropolitan Community Church, Providence, R.I.,
on Gay Rights.
- ~Liz Schneider, Center for Constitutional Rights,
on Women's Issues.

Langdell South Middle, Harvard Law School
Wednesday, November 16, 7:30 p.m.

~ sponsored by a coalition of 16 Harvard Law School Organizations.

of all kinds. There are "closet gays" who keep their homosexuality a secret outside the close confines of the church walls, avowed homosexuals and lesbians who are quite "open" about it at home and work, and "straight people," an estimated 15 percent of the congregation, who regard MCC as a nice place to go to church.

Seventy percent of the members are former Catholics. Most of the rest are Episcopalian, Methodist, Adventist or Baptist.

"We're getting more Protestants now than we used to," says the 49-year-old woman pastor, who often shows up for services wearing denim jeans and jacket over a clerical blouse and Roman collar.

Pastor Ragona observed that the church's former pastor, the Rev. Joseph Gilbert, was an ex-Episcopalian who ran his services in a high style, with church vestments and formal liturgies, which usually attracted the Catholics and Episcopalians.

She said her services are "less rigid and formal. So we're getting more Protestants now, and I think most of our members are more content with it."

ANY SUNDAY NIGHT one finds a service much like any other. It is regarded by many as reverent and spiritual, yet low-key.

There are scripture readings, traditional hymns and spontaneous prayers. Members start the Lord's Prayer with "Our Creator" instead of "Our Father."

"We've been going through the prayers and the hymns to take out the offensive sexist terminology," a member explained.

The sermon also tends to be traditional, though geared to the needs of homosexuals. At one recent service, the subject was sin, and on a scriptural verse taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew:

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit... Thus you will know them by their fruits."

Talking about sin to a congregation in the Metropolitan Community Church is like walking "a narrow tight-rope," Pastor Ragona conceded. On the one hand, some people are still wrestling with the question of whether God considers their homosexuality a sin. On the other, some people have already been so burdened with feelings of guilt and anxiety about homosexuality that they don't want to hear about sin at all, she said.

BUT SIN is worth talking about, she said. What Jesus is talking about, she said, is not just one particular kind of sin, but an entire spectrum of things — turning one's back from a person in need, striking out in anger against loved ones, judging and pre-judging other individuals.

Avoiding sin, she said, gives one a "sense of liberation" and frees one from the "load of depression and anxiety that

character would cause them to feel to homosexuals. I think there is enough peer pressure not to be different that most children are going to choose a heterosexual way of life, regardless of what parents say or do."

Another man said he disagreed slightly. "I don't think people have a choice. It's the way God makes you. If I had a choice between being gay or straight, I would have chosen being straight."

Pauline Johnson, a 71-year-old black woman from Newton, Mass., is "straight." But she comes to MCC, she says, because "I had a religious experience at MCC that I hadn't had in years. I've experienced more love, more Christianity here than I've seen anywhere."

PASTOR RAGONA says that as a teenager she wanted to be a missionary. But she changed her mind while attending nursing school when she went to a lesbian bar and discovered she was a homosexual.

So she went into nursing instead and eventually married a psychology professor at Louisiana State University. Her husband — a "bisexual" — "knew I was gay." But both shared the same vision of a little house in the country with kids.

But her husband died four years later of cancer and she took up residence with a woman companion. During that time, she says, she underwent a "born-again" experience and came to feel that God would "accept" her homosexuality.

She began teaching at a nearby elementary school, joined the Baptist Church, and became a Sunday school teacher and the religious education director.

She remarried, but the marriage didn't last. She said that when her husband learned she was "gay, all hell broke loose."

Then in 1973, she returned to New York, and after deciding to become a minister in the Metropolitan Church, she broke the news about her homosexuality to her two teenage sons and younger daughter. She moved to Providence last year after studying at New York Theological Seminary and the Institute for Theology.

SHE DEFINES "gayness" as an "emotional, affectional sexual attraction to a person of the same sex."

The minister says she regards homosexuality as "a normal variation" and does not share the view of many churches that a homosexual way of life is "intrinsically disordered."

Sex between homosexuals, like heterosexual promiscuity, may be morally wrong "if it is not done in a loving and caring way," she says. "but what bothers me is that while you have a lot of fundamentalists condemning gays, you don't hear them talking about rapists."

She says being a homosexual today does take "its toll on the personality" because of the constant fear of being found out.

She says her two sons, ages 19 and 20, and her daughter, 13, are used to her homosexuality now and "have a grudging respect for what I'm doing."

R.I. Baha'i c on equality o

THE RHODE ISLAND BAHAI COMMUNITY will sponsor a talk on "The Equality of Men and Women — A Basis for World Peace" at the Mariam J. Mohr Library in Johnston on Tuesday from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The talk will be the second in a three-part series on "Human Rights."

Speaking will be Susan R. Berge, economic analyst with Tucker, Anthony & R. L. Day Inc. A Baha'i since 1970, she has been a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom for three years and is currently serving as chairman of the Cranston Baha'i Assembly and chairman of the Rhode Island Baha'i Teaching Committee.

After the talk, there will be discussion and refreshments. The public is invited to attend this free lecture.

AN OPENING-OF-SCHOOL LITURGY will be held Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul. The Most Rev. Louis E. Gelineau, Roman Catholic bishop of Providence, will be the principal celebrant.

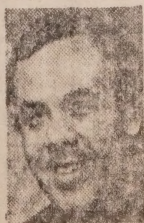
All pastors with schools, pastors with parishioners in Catholic schools, principals, regional school board presidents, teachers, as well as parents and students have been invited by Brother Stephen O'Hara, FSC, the superintendent of schools in the diocese. The Most Rev. Kenneth A. Angell, auxiliary bishop, will be the homilist.

The fifth annual Distinguished Service Award will be presented to two outstanding educators in the diocese at the conclusion of the liturgy.

A PRIEST FROM PAWTUCKET, the Rev. Laurence M. Olszewski, CSC, has arrived in Senegal, Africa, to work as a program assistant for Catholic Relief Services.

Father Olszewski, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Olszewski of 11 Coyle Ave., Pawtucket, holds degrees from Stonehill College, the University of Montreal, Harvard University and the University of Salamanca, Spain. He was ordained in North Easton, Mass., in 1964.

Catholic Relief Services is the official overseas aid and development agency of American Catholics. Its programs in 86 countries are valued at \$225 million annually.



OLSZEWSKI

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Homosexuals express faith, love at MCC

By RICHARD C. DUJARDIN
Journal-Bulletin Religion Writer

PROVIDENCE — Each Sunday evening, the members of the Metropolitan Community Church gather at the Mathewson Street United Methodist Church for worship.

The atmosphere is calm and reverent, as strains of "How Great Thou Art" fill the air. Downstairs, a dozen or so children gather at the same time for their weekly Sunday school lesson.

Outwardly the church is like many. Besides the Sunday school, the church runs flea markets and potluck suppers, conducts Bible study courses and holds worship services in which members pray for one another, read Biblical passages, and partake of Communion bread and wine.

Its minister, the Rev. Marge Ragona, — talks of the importance of a religious conversion experience to Jesus Christ. A daughter of a Methodist minister, she is a former fifth-grade teacher and a former religious education director of a Southern Baptist church in Louisiana.

Ragona says she is "born again."

• • •

SHE IS also a lesbian, a mother of three, and the pastor of Providence's only avowedly "homosexual" church, a congregation numbering 40 or so regular members, 15 or so "hangers on" and some 25 to 30 children of "gay" parents.

For the last couple of years, MCC had been holding its services at the Mathewson Street Methodist Church each Sunday at 7 p.m. The group used to hold services in a private apartment, but gave that up because rocks were thrown through the window during services.

Members of the church range in age from the early 20s to the 70s, and are individuals and "couples" of all kinds. There are "closet gays" who keep their homosexuality a secret outside the close confines of the church walls, avowed homosexuals and lesbians who are quite "open" about it at home and work, and "straight people," an estimated 15 percent of the congregation who re-



RAGONA

comes when you are not doing God's will."

And like the fig tree bearing good fruit, she said, "we too will flourish if we are open and loving and giving toward one another. It matters not how others may judge us. We have but one Judge. And by our fruits the Lord will know us."

• • •

LATER in the service, the children in the Sunday school arrive to join their parents for the Communion.

Breaking bread on the altar table, Pastor Ragona recites Christ's words of the Last Supper, blessing the bread and the wine. And on signal the participants come up to the Communion rail. They walk up as couples hand-in-hand, as individuals, or as mother-and-child, or as mother-lover-and-child, depending on the circumstance.

Dipping the bread into the wine, the minister places the Communion on the tongue of the kneeling communicants. Then in a minute-long embrace, she huddles with the individual and/or couple, reciting a prayer asking God's help in overcoming the struggles and problems of the moment.

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MEMBERS of the congregation give varied reasons for coming to Metropolitan Community Church.

A 39-year-old college professor said that at first he was afraid to be seen walking into a "gay" church, even though he did not fear being seen in gay bars.

"But the vibrations and love I found here were so strong that I knew I just had to stay," he said. "I received so much faith in myself and in my God here that nothing else seems to matter."

A lesbian mother of six and a lesbian mother of two, both divorced, said the church Sunday school afforded them an opportunity to worship again "as a family."

The parents said they did not think attendance at a predominantly homosexual church would cause their children to be homosexuals. "I think there is enough peer pressure not be different that most children are going to choose a heterosexual way of life, regardless of what parents say or do."

Another man said he disagreed slightly. "I don't think people have a choice. It's



Sunday service

The Rev. Marge Ragona, above center, "huddles" in prayer with two people after they received Communion at the Metropolitan Community Church, Providence's only church for homosexuals. At right, the congregation joins hands during a prayer. Story on this page.

—Journal-Bulletin Photos
by LAWRENCE S. MILLARD

